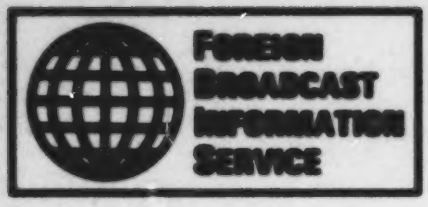

Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-082
Friday
26 April 1996

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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab: Arab League Chief on Lebanon, Israel, U.S. Threats to Libya

NC2504153696 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 19 Apr 96 pp 24-25

[Interview with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid by Najwan 'Abd-al-Latif in Cairo on 16 April]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] ['Abd-al-Latif] Lebanon is once again bleeding at the hand of the Israelis. The Arab people are asking: What kind of peace is this? What will the Arab nation do to deter this blatant aggression?

['Abd-al-Majid] We condemn these aggressive Israeli practices, that conflict with international laws and conventions. The Arab League expressed its absolute solidarity with the Lebanese people's steadfastness and right to defend their territory. Israel's bombardment of the Lebanese capital and other cities is a flagrant violation of Lebanon's safety and security. It is another Israeli obstacle in the way of peace. We demand that all necessary measures be taken to force Israel to implement Security Council Resolution 425, which calls for Israel's withdrawal from all Lebanese territories; this is the core of the problem. We regret the support the United States gives for Israel, whether the latter is right or wrong. This support prevented the UN Security Council from issuing a resolution condemning Israel. I would like to warn that millions of Arabs are in a state of rage. The Israeli aggression threatens the peace process; it will strengthen, rather than weaken, Hizballah. At Lebanon's request, the Arab foreign ministers will meet tomorrow to discuss what we can do to confront this aggression.

['Abd-al-Latif] Do you not believe that there is a pressing need to hold an Arab summit now? This summit has become a dream.

['Abd-al-Majid] All of us hope that an Arab summit will be held. We called for an Arab summit, and we are still calling for it. We hope it will be held because the nation really needs it. I will soon be visiting the Arab capitals to repeat the call for an Arab summit, to discuss the possibility of Arab reconciliation, and to review the issues that concern the nation. [passage omitted]

['Abd-al-Latif] The region is witnessing some developments that tip the military balance of power further in favor of Israel. There is a military cooperation agreement between Israel and Turkey and a planned military alliance between Israel and the United States.

['Abd-al-Majid] I have said that this is not the time for an agreement between Turkey and Israel. The agreement is unjustified, and it increases tension in the region. We are eager for good relations with Turkey but without relinquishing our pan-Arab security and water rights. The Arab League has repeatedly called for solving the water problem among Turkey, Syria, and Iraq through dialogue and understanding. We are ready to host such a meeting at the Arab League. I see things that threaten to redraft our Arab map politically, economically, and socially on new bases. I fear that unified Arab action will become history if we do not prepare ourselves and work together.

['Abd-al-Latif] What did you do to diminish the Arab citizen's sense of impotence toward the designs that are being drawn up against his nation? For example, here is the U.S. secretary of defense threatening to attack Libya; there is a nuclear danger from Dimona; and the Israeli nuclear power is unrestricted and is not subjected to international supervision.

['Abd-al-Majid] We are working hard to change these situations. I have recently sent messages to the UN secretary general, the UN Security Council president, and the president of the International Atomic Energy Agency urging swift intervention to curb the Israeli nuclear threat. In those messages, I emphasized the danger of continuing to have the Israeli reactor of Dimona in a region subject to earthquakes without international inspection. I said that Israel's possession of nuclear power is a risk to the Arab peoples' sovereignty, security, environment, and water sources, especially if Israel continues to refuse to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

With regard to William Perry's statement on the United States' preparation for military action against Libya to prevent them from producing chemical weapons, the Arab League Secretariat expressed regret for such a statement. Libya stressed that it does not intend to produce any chemical weapons, and it denied that it has any program to produce those weapons. We are against any military action. Problems must be solved through diplomatic channels. It is important to remove all weapons of mass destruction from the region. We call on the world not to use double standards. Israel's unilateral possession of nuclear weapons in the region threatens the region's security and stability. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: PNC To Conclude Session, Issue Final Statement

JN2504142996 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the presence of President Yasir 'Arafat, the Palestine National Council [PNC]

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concluded a meeting at noon [0900 GMT] today. During the meeting, the PNC members discussed reports by the [Palestinian] National Fund and the political committee on Jerusalem, the settlements, the refugees, and the construction of the homeland.

The PNC will resume its session at the al-Shawwa Cultural Center in Gaza this evening. During the evening meeting, the PNC will elect a new 18-member PLO Executive Committee. In addition, the political committee's statement and the final statement of the PNC's 21st session will be read. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: PNC Resumes Debate; Officials Welcome Labor Party Decision

JN2504201396 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 25 Apr 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestine National Council [PNC] emphasized that Jerusalem is the capital of the independent Palestinian state. Political Committee Chairman Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahman—who read the committee's statement during the evening session of the PNC, which is still under way at al-Shawwa Center in Gaza—said that peace cannot be established unless the Palestinian people regain their rights in the holy city. 'Abd-al-Rahman said that the final-status negotiations should be based on the full and honest implementation of UN Resolutions 242 and 338 and the Israeli occupation troops' withdrawal from all Palestinian territories occupied in 1967.

The PNC condemned the ugly Israeli massacre against the unarmed civilians in Lebanon. It voiced support for the Lebanese people in their confrontation of the Israeli aggression. It urged the Arab nation to extend assistance to the Lebanese people. It also urged the Israeli Government to immediately halt aggression in Lebanon and withdraw from the Lebanese territories.

'Abd-al-Rahman said that the PNC reiterated its adherence to the UN resolutions on confederation between Palestine and Jordan after the establishment of the independent Palestinian state on the basis of the peoples' free choice. The PNC described the decision to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem as detrimental to the peace process. The PNC stressed the need for Israel to release all Palestinian prisoners, open the transportation corridors, and release the Palestinian economy from all constraints, in implementation of the agreements signed between the two sides.

In a decision on national unity, the PNC said it highly appreciated national dialogue. It called on all forces and factions to return and participate in building the homeland. 'Abd-al-Rahman stressed the importance of drawing up a Palestinian development plan and self-reliance to ensure the independence of the national economy. He said that the National Authority is the legitimate authority.

The PNC greeted the Palestinian people and urged the cementing of inter-Arab relations. It called for lifting the embargo against Iraq and Lebanon and activating the UN role. The PNC said that the presidential and legislative elections are essential to building an independent homeland. It called for drafting laws to boost civil society.

More details from our colleague Mu'in Shadid:

[Begin Shadid recording] The PNC is scheduled to resume its session in a few minutes to elect a new PLO Executive Committee. The Voice of Palestine learned that five members of the committee will be from Fatah Movement, in addition to six independents and seven members from other Palestinian factions.

In another development, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation in the Palestinian National Authority, described the Israeli Labor Party's decision to cancel its opposition to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state as extremely positive. Sha'th said that he believes Shim'on Peres will adhere to this decision after the elections.

Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government, said the decision is a step in the right direction. He added that it is clear to all now that peace in the region should be based on two states: Palestine and Israel. He noted that this is the logical solution that we seek through the final-status talks. He said the amendment of the PLO Charter is a step toward establishing the independent Palestinian state.

On the Labor Party's emphasis on Jerusalem as the united, permanent capital of Israel, 'Urayqat said: We cannot be guards in the struggle of the Labor Party's leaders. However, we emphasize that East Jerusalem is an inseparable part of the Palestinian territories that were occupied in June 1967.

Commenting on the Israeli Labor Party's decision, Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to President Yasir 'Arafat, said: There is no doubt that this decision is a step forward and will help ensure the success of the peace process. Without the acknowledgement of the Palestinian people's right to establish the independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and with Jerusalem as its capital, peace will remain endangered. This is a step forward. However, one step is not enough. It should turn into official Israeli policy. There should be mutual

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recognition between the PLO and the Israeli Government. There should be official talks, within the final-status negotiations, on the establishment of the independent Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

Abu-Rudaynah called on the Israeli Government to adhere to what it signed, especially in light of the PNC's decisions. Abu-Rudaynah said that the Norwegian foreign minister phoned President Yasir 'Arafat a short while ago. They discussed the entry into Hebron of the international troops and the vanguards of the Norwegian force, which entered the city yesterday. President 'Arafat briefed the Norwegian foreign minister on the decisions made at the PNC session.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Dennis Ross phoned President Yasir 'Arafat late last night. 'Arafat also held a telephone conversation with Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres following the adoption of the PNC resolutions. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: New PLO Executive Committee Elected

JN2504195896 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1821 GMT 25 Apr 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear viewers, we have just received the following:

The PLO Executive Committee has been elected as follows: —Brother Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee —Brother Mahmud 'Abbas —Brother Faruq Qaddumi —Brother Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh —Brother Sulayman al-Najjab —Brother 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh —Brother Muhammad 'Awdah —Brother 'Ali Ishaq —Brother Samir Ghawshah —Brother Mahmud Isma'il —Brother Yasir 'Amr —Brother Faysal al-Husayni —Brother As'ad 'Abd-al-Rahman —Brother Emil al-Jarju'i —Brother Zakariya al-Agha —Brother Ghassan al-Shak'ah —Brother Riyad al-Khudari —Brother Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi, head of the Palestine National Fund.

Palestinian Affairs: New Committee Formation, Final Statement of PNC Reported

JN2604065596 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestine National Council [PNC] concluded its 21st session last night by issuing a final political statement and electing a new PLO Executive Committee. The new committee comprises representatives of Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Palestine Liberation Front, the Arab Liberation Front, the Palestinian People's Party, and FIDA [Palestinian Democratic Union Party], in addition to a number of independents.

The new PLO Executive Committee comprises:

President Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee;

Mahmud 'Abbas, also known as Abu-Mazin; Faruq Qaddumi, also known as Abu-al-Lutf; Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh; Ghassan al-Shak'ah; Taysir Khalid [Muhammad 'Awdah]; Sulayman al-Najjab; Emil al-Jarju'i; Faysal al-Husayni; Zakariya al-Agha; As'ad 'Abd-al-Rahman; Riyad al-Khudari; 'Ali Ishaq; Mahmud Isma'il; Samir Ghawshah; Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi; Yasir 'Amr; and 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh.

The new PLO Executive Committee was elected by a large majority. Only 12 members voted against it. Following its election, the new PLO Executive Committee held a meeting under President Yasir 'Arafat.

At the conclusion of its historic session — which convened in the homeland for the first time in 32 years and which convened for the first time under the Palestinian National Authority — the PNC issued a final statement in which it reiterated the requirements of the coming stage. The PNC noted the need to entrench the National Authority on the bases of pluralism and democracy.

The statement stresses the need for the Israeli side to fulfill its pledges and commitments vis-a-vis the peace process, noting that the peace process will be in danger if an independent Palestinian state, with Jerusalem as its capital, is not established. The statement notes the need to embark on the final stage talks on its set date, 4 May, to discuss the issues of Jerusalem, refugees, and settlements. The PNC statement greets Palestinian national unity, noting the need to continue national dialogue among all Palestinian forces and factions.

The PNC decided in its final session to send a solidarity cable to Nabih Birri, speaker of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies, to express the Palestinian people's solidarity with the brothers in Lebanon. The PNC also decided to send a congratulatory cable to the Egyptian People's Assembly on the occasion of Egypt's celebration of the liberation of the Sinai anniversary.

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Palestinian Affairs: Al-Za'nun—PNC Membership To Be Reduced to 300

TA2504125896 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 23 Apr 96 pp 1, 22

[Report by 'Ala' al-Mashahrawi]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Gaza — Palestine National Council [PNC] Chairman Salim al-Za'nun has stated that the membership of the [PNC] in its upcoming session will be reduced to 300. [passage omitted]

Al-Za'nun added that the PNC will not include representatives of political parties established in the National Authority era.

Palestinian Affairs: PFLP—Establishment of Authority 'Distinguished Event'

JN2504161796 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Popular Front [for the Liberation of Palestine, PFLP] said that the establishment of a Palestinian National Authority for the first time on Palestinian territory is a distinguished event.

In a memorandum distributed to the various factions and national figures in Gaza, the PFLP called for completing the construction of the National Authority on the basis of pluralism and democracy.

Palestinian Affairs: PFLP-GC—Amendments to Charter 'Cancel' Homeland

JN2504164296 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1330 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] issued the following statement:

Under the yoke of occupation, submitting to the Zionist enemy dictates, and in response to U.S. wishes, 'Arafat and his companions — those who call themselves members of the [Palestine] National Council — perpetrated a most grotesque act against the Palestinian Arab people's history of struggle. They decided to cancel articles in the Palestinian National Charter that define the Palestinian homeland and emphasize our people's right to Palestinian land.

The PFLP-GC said: On this black day in contemporary history, some individuals meeting in Gaza tarnished the history of the Palestinian struggle. They submitted to the Zionist enemy's dictates, handed over it the Palestinian land, and agreed to Judaize it, thus canceling the Palestinian homeland and the right to return, eliminating our jihad, expropriating the future of our children, and trampling the sacrifices of our people, who have set the most glorious examples through their selflessness and sincerity.

The names of 'Arafat and his companions will be stained and tarnished, and we will distribute a blacklist of all those who raised their hands to endorse the cancellation of the Palestinian homeland so that history will not be forged and so that they will be held in shame by all our people, the Arab nation, and the Islamic world.

The PFLP-GC announces to the Palestinian Arab people, to our Arab masses, and to the whole world that what was approved by the illegitimate national council does not represent us or any of the Palestinian people. It will be null and void and will be binding only on those who raised their shaky hands on this black day in order to add their names to the blacklist.

The PFLP-GC announces to the Palestinian Arab people, our Arab masses, and to the whole world that those who voted to cancel the Palestinian homeland at the meeting in Gaza on 24 April 1996 have joined the enemies of the Palestinian struggle, that they have left the ranks of our people and now stand in the trenches of those who are hostile to our people's aspirations and sacrifices.

The PFLP-GC tells the families of the martyrs, the wounded, the heroic detainees who are behind enemy prison bars, and to all the refugees in the diaspora, that it will not approve the cancellation of the homeland by the illegitimate council meeting in Gaza, that it will only abide by the covenant of the martyrs and will not deviate from it, and that it will remain faithful to the martyrs' blood and to our people's aspirations. All those whose names will be placed on the blacklist will learn that our people are stronger than their defeatism and submission and that our people are capable of continuing the struggle.

A revolution until the liberation of land and man.

[Signed] The PFLP-GC

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Denounces Charter, Pledges To Resume Armed Struggle

LD2504182896 Tripoli JANA in English 1747 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Word indistinct] al Tayr [Apr] 25, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY — Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] movement has strongly denounced the defeatist move made by the P.L.O. in revoking the articles of the Palestinian National Charter which calls for armed struggle and the liberation of the whole occupied Palestine. Hamas movement pledged to resume armed struggle against Israeli occupation.

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The official spokesman of Hamas movement said the Palestinian Arab people will see this move as a humiliating set-back within the saga of compromises and submissivenes by the P.L.O. It indicated that all those who sign the amendment will be wretched outcasts in the eyes of millions of Palestinians for centuries to come.

Hamas movement confirmed that the amendment of the charter is a major gift presented by 'Arafat to terrorist Peres before the Israeli elections.

Palestinian Affairs: Officials, International Observers Meet in Hebron

JN2504172596 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 25 Apr 96

[Report by Salim Abu-Salih in Hebron]

[FBIS Translated Text] The meeting between the Palestinian side and the command and officials from the international observer vanguard from Norway concluded a short while ago in Hebron. The Norwegian observers will take up positions in Hebron.

The meeting was attended by Brigadier General Isma'il Jabr, commander of the National Security Forces in the northern governorates; Colonel Jibril al-Rujub, official in charge of preventive security; Colonel Tawfiq al-Tirawi, official in charge of general intelligence; Brigadier General 'Abd-al-Fattah (al-Dhuhaybi), commander of the National Security Forces in the Hebron Governorate; Colonel 'Awni al-Natshah, (al-Dhuhaybi's) deputy; Colonel Yusuf Abu-Zayd, deputy commander of Palestinian police in the Hebron Governorate; and the mayor and council members of Hebron Municipality.

In a statement to our radio, Brig. Gen. Isma'il Jabr said: The international observer vanguards arrived in accordance with the agreement signed with Israel. The duties of this force will be discussed with the Israeli side, in accordance with this agreement. It will carry out its duties before, during, and after the redeployment. The vanguards will continue to arrive on 27 April.

(Golf Brug), who is in charge of the Norwegian unit, said: We came to discuss the arrangements and to make the necessary preparations for this force, which will include 50 unarmed Norwegian observers and an unspecified number of observers from Canada, Australia, and the EU. This force will be under Norwegian command, he added.

(Brug) declined to give more details. He said: At present, I do not want to go into detail, especially since we are negotiating these details with the Palestinians and the Israelis. We will meet with the Israelis tomorrow as a prelude to signing an agreement with both sides.

(Brug) expressed hope that this force will succeed in its task, in cooperation with the Palestinian and Israeli sides. The delegation is now on an inspection tour of the Old City, accompanied by the mayor and council members of Hebron, to acquaint themselves with the Israeli military sites and settlements and with the area in which they will deploy.

Palestinian Affairs: Commentary—'Arafat Killed History by Amending Charter

JN2504182996 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1354 GMT 25 Apr 96

[Station commentary: "The Grapes of Wrath Council"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Brothers: This is Yasir 'Arafat. This is the reckless killer. But this time he did not kill young and old people, he did not blow up mosques, he did not arrest thousands of the people's sons, and he did not go on the rampage in Palestine, Lebanon, and Tunis. This time, he committed an abhorrent atrocity. This time, he killed history and shed the blood of martyrs once again. This time, he brought together venal and vile skeletons and asked them to speak. They approved his crime — the cancellation of tradition and the firm establishment of the Zionist entity's state in Palestine.

'Arafat is the greatest opportunist of our time. The murdered Rabin described him as a Jew. 'Arafat is the one who hatched the Jewish plot to assassinate struggler Yahya 'Ayyash. He is the one who took off his hat and belt and bowed to Rabin's wife. 'Arafat also said his cousins have Hebrew progeny. He is leading another aggression, just as Peres is doing in his Grapes of Wrath. Peres' grapes reflect the Jewish Torah name, while 'Arafat's grapes are those of hatred and grudge. He hates Palestine and holds grudges against the nation. There is no difference between the grapes of Peres and those of 'Arafat. The password, objectives, and the map of killing are the same. Peres smears his hands in the blood of Qana. 'Arafat, on the other hand, smears his hand in the blood of Jerusalem. While Peres is assassinating innocent eyes in al-Nabatiyah, 'Arafat is gouging out angry eyes in Gaza. Peres' grapes are those of Jewish hatred. 'Arafat's are the same, if not more. Peres' grapes are those of direct killing. 'Arafat's are those of murder at the hands of the council of the grapes of bloody and fatal wrath.

Cursed be those who show fear and sell out. Cursed be those who are insensitive to the taste of humiliation and disgrace. It is a revolution until the liberation of land and man.

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Palestinian Affairs: Israel Urged To Implement Commitments After PNC Decision

TA2504150996 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 25 Apr 96 p 13

[Editorial: "Amending the Charter"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At a time when the Palestine National Council [PNC] has adopted a positive decision — in favor of the peace process — on the issue of amending the Palestinian National Charter, Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres still insists on his positions on the Palestinian and Lebanese levels. He stresses that the siege imposed on the Palestinian territories will continue and that the ongoing Israeli aggression against fraternal Lebanon will also continue for an indefinite period.

The continuation of this hardline Israeli position, which rivals that of Israeli right-wing and extremist parties for known electoral purposes, will undoubtedly not create the necessary impetus for advancing the peace process. In fact, it will deal a hard blow to the sincere efforts aimed at extricating the peace process from deadlock and advancing it toward the realization of the desired goals.

As of yesterday, instead of the Israeli side presenting positive initiatives and positions for advancing the peace process, Peres again stressed that he does not promise to implement the agreement on redeployment in Hebron. Moreover, the issues that have not been resolved yet — such as the release of male and female prisoners in Israeli jails, the opening of safe passages, and implementation of the economic agreement signed between the two sides — are all on hold. The Israeli side does not seem determined to open these files, at least not in the near future.

The Palestinian people in general, and their National Authority and PNC in particular, realize the dimensions of the stage and the Israeli threats and challenges against Palestinian aspirations and the Palestinian people's hopes to establish their independent state. The Palestinians are well aware that the Israeli side is searching for pretexts to stop the peace process and prevent the Palestinian people — at any cost — from attaining their legitimate rights. Hence, all these considerations weighed heavily in yesterday's PNC decision, adopted by a large majority.

In conclusion, at a time when the PNC democratically adopted the necessary amendment formula to advance the peace process, and set a timetable for drawing up a charter based on this amendment, it is certain that the next few weeks will constitute a real test of Israeli intentions and, ultimately, a criterion of commitment to the dues of the peace process, especially as such a commitment must not be confined to one side only.

Palestinian Affairs: PFLP-GC Reports Material Losses in Israeli Air Raid

JN2504141796 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1330 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE filed a report citing what it calls security sources who say that Zionist war planes destroyed a Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] ammunition depot in the al-Biqa' plain today and that the Zionist planes dropped three air-to-surface missiles on Tallat al-Bayyadah, between Kafr Zabad and ('Anjar). The agency said that explosions at the PFLP-GC depot could be heard for 15 minutes in the area.

However, a PFLP-GC spokesman said the following: At 1500 [1200 GMT] today, a PFLP-GC mobilization center came under an enemy air raid. Enemy planes fired air-to-surface missiles at the PFLP-GC mobilization center.

The spokesman reported no casualties and said that only material losses were sustained.

This Zionist raid coincides with the cancellation of some paragraphs in the Palestine National Charter by Yasir 'Arafat and his anti-national council.

Palestinian Affairs: 2d Most Wanted Hamas Man Arrested 20 Apr

TA2504123396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian security services in Gaza have disclosed that they have arrested 'Adnan al-Ghul, the second most prominent wanted Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] man, in a raid last Saturday [20 April]. Al-Ghul is considered the deputy of Muhammad Dayf, and he is in the list of fugitives Israel asked the Palestinians to arrest in the wake of the recent bombings. The Palestinians claim al-Ghul was involved in the planning of those bombings.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Text' of Palestinian Anti-Hamas Document

JN2604065396 Amman AL-MAJD in Arabic 22 Apr 95 p 5

["Text" of document submitted to PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by "Joint Palestinian Emergency Committee" dated March 1996]

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. President, leader brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat]. Greetings of loyalty and pledge.

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Subject: Deliberations and recommendations of the Joint Palestinian Emergency Committee.

The joint committee has, since you directed that it be set up, convened six lengthy sessions during which it surveyed all the security reports and intelligence gathered by the security agencies of the National Authority inside and outside the authority's territories. The committee also pondered minutes of investigations of tens of detained Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] members.

The committee later convened two lengthy sessions during which it drew up its recommendations and vision of how best to combat Hamas, drawing on past experience in fighting this movement and countering its activities.

Before our presentation of the gist of the committee's recommendations, it is necessary that you be aware of inconveniences experienced by the committee members, in the hope that you explain some of them and direct competent authorities to verify the rest.

1. It emerged from the deliberations and observations made by some heads of security agencies participating in the committee that there exists another parallel committee whose responsibilities overlap those of the Emergency Committee. It is hoped that you will check the accuracy of this matter. In the meantime, we hereby declare our absolute rejection of any duality in our line of work and stress the need for any parallel committees to be disbanded.

2. To date, no financial compensation has been set for the committee members. They are putting in extra time and exerting extra effort beyond the requirements of their normal duties. This matter, which we think should be pointed out, was discussed in some detail by the committee members.

3. The reports made available to the Emergency Committee by the security agencies which they say were obtained from our sources in Amman have a number of inconsistencies, leading most committee members to question the credibility of one of the sources for these reports. There is the possibility that that source is controlled either by the Jordanian intelligence or by Hamas in Jordan. We, therefore, stress the need to look into this matter to set the record straight. These inconsistencies and doubts were brought to the attention of the security agencies.

Mr. President: Following is a summary of the committee's discussions and recommendations on combating Hamas. We will, at a later date, report to you on detailed measures and mechanisms for the implementation of these recommendations.

The committee noted there is a constant need for revising and reevaluating our understanding of Hamas. Every time such a study is undertaken, the new facts and information we come to learn about Hamas shows just how inadequate our understanding of the movement is.

Following are findings reached by the joint committee:

— Hamas' often-repeated assertions that it is not offering itself to the Palestinian people as a substitute for the PLO or Fatah are not true. Indeed, all indications on the ground are that Hamas is preparing itself to be a future substitute for the PLO, Fatah, and the National Authority. Although none of the documents that the security agencies laid their hands on while raiding the homes of Hamas leaders expressly says they are out to achieve that end, all their political action among the Palestinian masses and a careful reading of these documents clearly indicate otherwise.

Their keenness to win over the unsophisticated segment of our people through mosques and social institutions under the guise of the call to God confirm what we said about their attempts to infiltrate the masses to propagate their political and ideological program and to turn from their present status as a politicized religious party isolated within the ranks of the mostly secular Palestinian people into one of a popular trend that would be hard to combat in the traditional style. Moreover, the persistent self-restraint they have shown over the past two years in reaction to measures taken by the authority, was not, as some commanders in the security agencies believe, a symptom of submission or weakness, but an act of shrewdness calculated to portray them as victims of the authority and to win what their documents call "the battle of the oppressed with the authority".

In their action, the Hamas activists apply the theory of the "two crutches" to achieve the regenerative duality [al-izdiwajiyah al-tawaludiyah] in the performance of their functions, with their machinery enjoying a flexible organic and vital, centralized and decentralized, relationship through which they react to plans aimed at striking at and downsizing them by countering and deflecting the opposing effort, and many times playing their opponents' game.

While Hamas organization in the interior constitutes one of the two crutches, Hamas agencies abroad, whose detailed and defined outlines have yet to be clear to us, represents the second crutch. In the interior, Hamas operates using various and parallel wings (organization-military-political-institutions-party). Even regarding the military structure, it is now clear that there are discrete sectors and cells, groups of roaming tourists [al-sa'ihin al-jawwalah], a clandestine structure and another on the

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run. Some of those on the run are also members of the clandestine structure. And so the regeneration and overlapping take place through an ongoing dynamism that, as the information indicates, makes it resistant to liquidation and total disbandment and capable of bouncing back and rebuilding and renovating itself every time it is hit.

Hence, the Joint Palestinian Emergency Committee consistently recommends that action be pursued to combat and downsize Hamas and forestall its effort to become a substitute for the PLO, which threatens the future of not only the National Authority and the PLO but also the future of Fatah itself. In pursuit of the above, we recommend the following course of action: 1. Liquidation of the military structure (the so-called 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions). 2. Political fragmentation (discourse and internal structure). 3. Disrupting and destabilizing Hamas' presence abroad.

First: Liquidation of the military structure (all arms of 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions).

Continued military action by al-Qassam Battalions poses a major threat to the National Authority and its political project. In the short-term, al-Qassam group's continued military activity militates against the Labor Party's winning the most important elections in Israel's history. All indications are that a single operation on the eve of the elections should be enough to clear the road to power for the extreme right wing camp and adversely affect the peace process and the future of the National Authority.

In the long term, continued military action by Hamas—which fascinates and wins over the masses, particularly given the present hard-line Israeli policies that will likely grow even more so when the final status talks get underway—would clear the road for the Hamas movement to gain increased public support that would advance its political program and substitution project. Moreover, continued military activity by Hamas would undermine Israel's confidence in the National Authority's ability to deliver on its commitments to the peace process with the possible result of Israel talking directly to Hamas and bypassing the authority.

In consideration of the above, the committee recommends the adoption of the following measures to liquidate the military structure:

A. In the short term (ending with the end of the Israeli elections).

1. The security closure contributes to a lessening of terrorist attacks despite the damage it is doing to the Palestinian economy. However, on the basis of information available to it the committee believes that the clandestine structure of al-Qassam group has not suffered, thus rendering it possible for new bombings to take place in the run-up to the Israeli elections. In the meantime, it is important that the Israelis should be asked to understand Palestinian opposition to maintaining the closure.

Utilizing political and security channels with the Israelis, the point should be made to them that such an understanding must not be leaked to the Israeli media lest it be exploited by the Likud and other right wing forces interested in aborting the National Authority experiment.

2. It is recommended that the joint Palestinian-Israeli Security Committee intensify its action and concentrate, at this stage, on intelligence gathering and keeping track of support bases and logistical support extended to Hamas abroad, especially in view of the inadequacy of our information in this respect.

3. Care should be taken not to liquidate, at this stage, any of al-Qassam's top leaders in the National Authority-controlled territories, because violent reactions may affect the Israeli elections as happened in the aftermath of the killing of Yahya 'Ayyash.

4. None of al-Qassam members should be surrendered to the Israelis, and, in the meantime, they should be made to keep off the field by arresting and tracking them so that they are robbed of the ability to engage in any effective action. Surrendering them to the Israelis would inflame the sentiments of Palestinian masses, further the Hamas movement, and undercut the authority's credibility.

B. In the strategic term:

1. The intelligence effort should be increased with a view to penetrating al-Qassam's secret organization, using novel and innovative tactics and benefiting from the successes made by security organs when they penetrated a group of fugitives in Gaza and then came to an understanding with them. As this effort is undertaken, it must be born in mind that the secret organization is especially cautious when it comes to their contacts with our security agencies.

2. A number of al-Qassam's leaders should be physically eliminated without hesitation at wide intervals despite potential retaliatory action. It is necessary to break their morale and defeat the mind-sets planning or executing suicide bombings, making sure that such operations are portrayed as isolated excesses or Israeli penetrations, the perpetrators of which are to be punished.

3. They should be monitored and tracked as they go about their work, move about, recruit, and conduct their communications, and there should be an interchange of

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intelligence gathered in these areas with neighboring states.

4. Upon the incidence of any terrorist act, it is recommended that, even lacking evidence to back up the claim, the blame must be laid at the door of Jordan, Lebanon, or Syria, with the object of easing pressure on the authority and putting further pressure on Hamas' support bases in these countries.

5. It is proposed that inactive Hamas members be singled out for monitoring and tracking, as these may be active in al-Qassam groups. Accordingly, in view of the broad base of Hamas activists and supporters, their Fatah counterparts would serve as the watchful eyes of the authority observing any suspicious and unfamiliar movements by the religious people.

6. Pressure must be brought to bear on Palestinian and other media not to cover terror acts in such a way that their perpetrators are glorified, but rather to focus on their devastating impact on the Palestinian economy and the National Authority experiment.

The committee urges the need to weaken their self-confidence and underline the futility of their actions and cut them off from public support ahead of alienating them from a sympathetic society.

7. Fragmenting Hamas politically and disrupting it externally are bound to help the effort to liquidate al-Qassam groups and curb their activities.

The Emergency Committee stresses that, as a long term objective, striking at the armed action of Hamas must aim at its total elimination. Just to scale down this movement and let it survive even on a limited scale and keeping it under siege will not suffice to forestall the substitute project of Hamas. Furthermore, such an approach is not convincing for the Israelis. The Israeli society and the nature of the relationship between the authority and Israel cannot afford continued military action by Hamas.

Second: Fragmenting Hamas' political capability.

Hamas' political capability rests on three pillars. — The political platform based on historical and religious rights. — The organizational structure and its breadth. — Assuming the posture of those who are championing the needs of the masses.

Hamas' political platform has maintained its stature for two principal considerations. The first is elevating the religious content, and the second its appearance as the party adhering to the people's historical rights.

In order to weaken this platform, it is enough to highlight the diversity of the religious opinions about the political line of the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian question so that Hamas is not left to be the exclusive spokesman for the religious dimension of events in the Palestinian arena. To pursue that goal, the existence of a plurality of religious trends will not, on its own, be sufficient. Contradictions in the Hamas leaders' political statements should be highlighted. In addition, their platform should be represented as an exercise in starry-eyed idealism detached from the pulse of the man in the street and concerns of the ordinary people.

Attempts at showing up inconsistencies in the political platform of Hamas leaders call for focusing on gaining the favor of the moderates among them — those who are impetuous, shortsighted, and of a modest intellectual ability, and, therefore, manipulatable. To achieve that end, dialogues should be held with such people rather than with members who entertain strategic visions.

If we manage to upset the organizational structure of Hamas, we would then contribute to weakening and shaking the credibility of its political platform. We, therefore, stress the need to enhance the standing of the moderates within Hamas through making public fora and institutions available to them rather than to the more committed cadres.

Such a measure should keep the authority insulated from popular resentment and rob Hamas of the opportunity to guide these institutions according to their plans and policies, while, at the same time, providing the authority with the opportunity to share in the running of these establishments.

In order to promote the goal of fragmenting Hamas politically, the leeway of their decisionmaking mechanism has to be restricted. Examples: freedom of movement; talking to their leaders while arrests continue; intensified dialogues with detained leaders individually; the carrot-and-stick tactic in the interest of upsetting their organizational structure.

In this context, the committee proposes that the team negotiating with Hamas be replaced, inasmuch as some of its members have lost their credibility with the movement and the rest are otherwise preoccupied. For instance, Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi is busy preparing for the elections, and al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim no longer enjoys the confidence of Hamas. The committee suggests that Shaykh 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish, Dr. Riyad al-Maliki, brother Marwan al-Barghuthi, and Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Hajj Ahmad, and others be tasked with talking to Hamas moderate leaders in the interior and abroad.

Third: Disrupting and destabilizing Hamas' presence abroad.

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Our 30-year experience in militant action tells us that an ongoing state of confused decisionmaking, organization, and structure has more of a crippling influence on freedom of movement than do direct conflicts.

Hamas is a far-flung, wide-ranging movement. It is more in the nature of specialized agencies and work departments than an organization per se. However, it, at the same time, has avant-gardistic support columns invariably ready for action, such as the Islamic movements and even nationalistic parties and movements that now help the Hamas platform and constitute a popular and ideological cover for that platform.

Before we present the committee's recommendations to confuse Hamas abroad, the point must be made that there are a number of mysterious organizational issues about Hamas. The Joint Palestinian Emergency Committee has asked the various security agencies to provide detailed information on these issues, in particular the organizational structure of the Hamas movement abroad, its decisionmaking mechanisms and policy-mapping procedure, as well as its funding channels and its active top echelons and their movements.

According to the information available to us, Hamas presence is strongest in Jordan and Lebanon. However, there are no consistent figures to back up this assumption, considering that the Hamas leadership every now and then makes changes among the ranks of the movement.

In any event, it is necessary to confuse the movement's decisionmaking process and existence abroad, particularly in Jordan, which now openly says that there are political leaders and information spokesmen for Hamas on its territory, including Ibrahim Ghawshah, Muhammad Nazzal, and Khalid Mash'al, who our sources think is the top man in Hamas' political bureau.

The Jordanian regime's game seems to be extremely transparent. King Husayn continues to harbor the dream and ambition of ruling the West Bank. In his tug-of-war with the National Authority he needs two cardinal cards. The first is a political one which he found in his alliance with Israel and the United States. In this regard, however, the Palestinian Authority has forestalled him through the Oslo Accords. According to the information available to us, the Americans and Israelis are playing the game of dual assurances. On the one hand, they are promising the National Authority to develop the Palestinian presence in Jordan, and, on the other, they are reassuring King Husayn concerning a future role for him in the West Bank and Jerusalem in order to satisfy his ambitions and allay his apprehensions. The second card is that Jordan found in Hamas an object of a long-cherished wish. Hamas seems to be ready to put its weight behind the king, in the manner of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood, in confronting the National Authority to abort its political goal of an independent Palestinian state.

There is no denying the shrewdness of the Jordanian regime in playing the Hamas card, inasmuch as the movement, which has an undeniable influence among the population in the West Bank and the Gaza strip, is diametrically opposed to the National Authority and the PLO. The Jordanian regime seems to have convinced the Israelis of its alliance with Hamas in exchange for limited security cooperation, while, at the same time, reassuring Israel that Hamas will not be permitted to use Jordanian territory as a springboard for military action. This explains the lack of seriousness on the part of the Jordanian security agencies in cooperating with their Palestinian counterparts, their rejection of the authority's demands that the movement's leaders operating from the Jordanian arena be arrested and providing our security agencies with information about their movements. Indeed, Jordanian security agencies are misleading us by controlling our sources of information on its territory.

Recommendations to confuse Hamas:

1. Pressure should be kept on the Jordanian regime directly and through Israel and the United States by leaking reports about Jordan continuing to harbor Hamas' political and military leaders and trying to prove the authenticity of such reports using all possible means.

2. Our ties with the Jordanian media and politicians should be used to incite against the presence of Hamas in the country.

3. Security reports on the potential for a National Authority-Hamas struggle being transferred to the Jordanian arena should be leaked, and we should engage in sharp arguments with the Muslim Brotherhood so that the Jordanian regime sees the need to put pressure on the presence of Hamas there.

4. New security networks in Jordan should be established to serve as sources of documented information. These new security networks should be in addition to the existing ones, some of which have now become questionable. These networks must be charged with security missions regarding Hamas, its cadres, the movement's activities, and the nature of its relations with the Jordanian regime.

5. We should continue to seek specific information from Jordan concerning Hamas' activity there, and portray the Jordanian regime as being in collusion with Hamas and less than cooperative in the fight against terrorism.

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6. We should publish documents, statements, and confessions by Hamas and 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions — real or fictional — which show Jordan to be harboring Hamas and sponsoring its activities, and indeed inciting it against the Palestinian Authority.

7. We should convince the Jordanian regime that the National Authority has assimilated Hamas in the interior, so that the movement is shown to be a useless and costly card.

Toward the realization of that end, wide-ranging arrests in the ranks of Hamas, moving to sow divisions within the movement's leadership, and shaking the credibility of its platform would probably prove helpful.

8. We should spotlight the injustice and deprivation experienced by Jordanians of Palestinian descent at the hands of the Jordanian regime to call its attention to the numerous cards the Palestinian Authority can use to put pressure on it.

Further to the above, within the framework of putting pressure on the movement's political and military leadership, Hamas' Gulf funding sources should not be overlooked. Money is the lifeline for political movements. Thus the authority needs to use tactics similar to those it deployed in the past to convince Gulf states to stem the flow of donations sent to Hamas and to prevent the movement's supporters from raising funds for its projects in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Toward that end, the committee proposes sending more diplomatic delegations to Gulf states.

The committee looked into the issue of liquidating Hamas leaders abroad. This matter has been assigned to a special commission for further consideration and then making the appropriate decision. However, preliminary deliberations on this issue have led us to the following conclusions:

A. The current state of affairs does not lend itself to such an option, nor will the authority's interests be served by it, because Hamas can still retaliate and our knowledge about the movement's real leaders is still limited. Moreover, such a step may embroil the authority in serious problems with neighboring states.

B. It is recommended that, instead of assassination, the tactic of sending threatening letters be adopted in order to confuse Hamas' leaders abroad and deprive them of peace of mind and a feeling of security. In any case, security agencies must be tasked with collecting information about Hamas and its activities in Jordan, Lebanon, and other countries. Perhaps this is one of the missions of the external security machine.

[Signed] The Joint Emergency Committee, March 1996

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Algeria

Algeria: GIA Claims Responsibility for Kidnapping French Monks

LD2604094396 Paris France-2 Teletext in French 0723 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a statement published on Friday [26 April] by the daily AL-HAYAT, the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) has claimed responsibility for kidnapping seven French monks in Algeria.

The GIA, which calls "on France and President Jacques Chirac," threatens "to cut the throats" of the monks if their militants held in France are not freed.

The seven monks, said to be "still alive and in good health," were kidnapped on 27 March at their monastery in Tibehirin south of Algiers.

[Paris France-Info Radio in French at 0830 GMT on 26 April carries a similar report which adds: "The Quai d'Orsay [French Foreign Ministry] says that for the time being it is unable to say whether the statement is authentic."]

Algeria: IMF Reviews Debt Rescheduling in Rome

LD2504154196 Algiers LIBERTE in French 13 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by M. Kheirddine: "Debt Rescheduling Brought in $20 Million"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] According to a well informed source, an Algerian delegation of experts led by Mr. Hamdi, the minister delegate in charge of planning, met IMF experts at the beginning of the month while putting the final touches to the debt rescheduling agreement with Italy.

It is not known whether this review of the agreement has been completed or if its results were positive. There is a complete black-out over this operation.

It has to be noted that assessing performance criteria (currency reserves, ceiling of credit to the 23 companies...[ellipsis as published]), which is the subject of the review, determines the provision of financial aid by the Fund and the release of funds by the World Bank in support of the adjustment program.

Two installments of $150 million will be released in June and at the end of the year. One must draw attention to the fact that in the event of a positive outcome from the review — which will last three months during the implementation of the extended agreement (1995-98) — the [International] Monetary Fund will release an installment from the $1.8 billion loan in support of the three-year program agreed to by this international financial institution. The installment will amount to $300 million.

We recall that the last review held in September [1995] ended with satisfaction on the part of the IMF. Algeria had only one problem concerning its currency reserves, which fell from $2.6 billion to $1.9 billion at the end of 1994.

The main aim of the new review is for the IMF to assess the country's economic situation and inflation level. A positive outcome of the review would mean giving the green light to the international financial community to pursue financial aid. Without this aid, the program of imports would not be achieved. In this context, the release of loan installments worth $300 million would be accompanied by the so-called overlapping conditions.

In order to obtain this loan, Algeria must satisfy both the clauses of the IMF, that is the performance criteria and the conditions of the World Bank, which are basically the implementation of the privatization program.

The loan from the World Bank is part of the sum of $20 million, obtained thanks to debt rescheduling operations. [passage omitted]

Algeria: Radio Reports $300 Million Loan From World Bank

LD2504224996 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 25 April

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The World Bank's board of governors, meeting today in Washington, has approved a $300 million loan for Algeria to boost structural reforms. This loan extends over 17 year years with a five-year grace period. [passage omitted]

Algeria: TV Reports $600 Million Loan From World Bank

LD2504205596 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The World Bank's board of governors, meeting on Thursday [25 April] in Washington, has approved a $600 million loan for Algeria for boosting structural reforms. This loan, which is for 17 years with a five-year extension period, falls within the framework of the strategic aid program offered to countries by the World Bank.

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Egypt

Egypt: Mubarak, Christopher Hold Telephone Conversation on Lebanon

NC2504151996 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received a telephone call from U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher immediately after the latter's plane left Tel Aviv for Damascus. Christopher informed President Mubarak of the results of his talks with the Israeli prime minister and his earlier talks with the Lebanese prime minister in Shtawrah. The U.S. secretary of state heard President Mubarak's views on how to confront the deteriorating situation in Lebanon and the need to promptly stop military operations there.

Egypt: Musa on Israeli 'Aggression,' Turkish-Israeli Accord

NC2604062696 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2055 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Apr (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa reaffirmed that Israel's aggression against Lebanon cannot produce positive or practical results contributing to peace. This operation which Israel calls Grapes of Wrath provides no assurance of good behavior now or in the future, he added.

In an interview with AL-JUMHURIYAH newspaper on Friday [26 April], Musa said that even if Israel managed this time to emerge with an agreement without incurring condemnation, the region will once again revert to a state of tension, hatred, and destruction. He emphasized that all this cannot help the peace process and its continuation in the region.

He stressed that Egypt supports the Arab side, which is demanding its right to regain its land, and supports its fair demands stipulated in the UN resolutions and accords produced by the Madrid conference. He said: We also support all the parties in their sincere wish to reach a just and balanced peace.

In his interview, Musa touched on the security agreement between Israel and Turkey. He said he will visit Turkey next week and learn about this agreement. He added that Turkish officials asserted that this agreement is not as has been reported, but is an ordinary agreement between two states just like any other accord.

Musa said the issue needs discussion, assurances, and clarifications, because the Middle East has either to enter in peace or engage in alliances and thus enter in a state of turbulence and tension.

The Egyptian foreign minister stressed that there can be no peace under a nuclear umbrella and in the presence of weapons of mass destruction. He said accepting peace under these circumstances amounts to throwing the Middle East into a situation much more dangerous that the previous Arab-Israeli conflict.

Libya

Libya: JANA Notes 'Correct' Saudi Position on Libyan Pilgrims

LD2504210696 Tripoli JANA in English 1458 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tunis, al Tayr [April] 25 JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY — The Saudi minister of pilgrimage confirmed that Saudia is warmly welcoming the Libyan-Arab pilgrims and is always ready to receive them when they are coming to perform their haj duties. The minister pledged that every service would be extended to them as they perform their religious duties.

In a statement to the Tunisian daily 'AL-SABAH' he said that the Saudis are receiving the Libyan Arab pilgrims with an open heart as they receive all pilgrims from throughout the world. This statement was made in confirmation of Saudia's correct position expressed by the Saudi minister of pilgrimage in his press statement which expressed the brotherly feelings of the Saudis towards their Libyan-Arab brothers who are coming on pilgrimage. This also confirms the depth of brotherly relations between the two countries.

Sudan

Sudan: Al-Bashir Appoints New Adviser

EA2504203196 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Summary] Staff Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, president of the Republic, has issued a Republican decree number 23 appointing Professor Ibrahim Ahmad 'Umar as an adviser in the president's office for (?origination) and strategy planning with the status of federal minister.

He also issued decree number 24 appointing Professor Ibrahim Ahmad 'Umar as chairman of the board of directors at the center for strategic studies.

Sudan: Al-Bashir Flies to Saudi Arabia To Perform Hajj

LD2504215496 Tehran IRNA in English 2049 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Khartoum, April 25, IRNA — Sudanese leader 'Umar al-Bashir Thursday [25 April]

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afternoon left for Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, to perform the Muslim ritual hajj.

Gen. al-Bashir is accompanied by presidency minister Brig. 'Abd-al-Rahim Muhammad Husayn, Minister of International Relations (foreign ministry) 'Ali 'Uthman Muhammad Taha and advisor to the president for defence affairs Col. Ibrahim Shams al-Din.

Al-Bashir did not give any departure statements. However on Monday he told a national tv interviewer that his government was "keen to remove the problems that faced bilateral relations after the Persian Gulf war." The Sudanese-Saudi relations, very strong in the past, were hit hard after the Persian Gulf war of 1991 in which the US-led allied forces flushed the Iraqi army out of Kuwait.

Many of the Persian Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia, had considered the Sudanese government's uneasy position towards the campaign against Iraq as siding with Iraq and an approval of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait.

"The Red Sea had never been barrier between the two peoples. It had, in fact, been a bridge of communication between them," he said.

Meanwhile, General al-Bashir on Thursday appointed former minister of higher education and scientific research Dr. Ibrahim Ahmad 'Umar as presidential advisor for originalisation and strategic planning. The term originalisation is usually used by the Islamic government of Sudan to mean Islamisation. Another presidential decree included the appointment of Dr. 'Umar as board chairman of the Strategic Studies Centre, the body responsible for strategic research.

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Bahrain

Bahrain: Opposition Group Calls For 'Civil Disobedience' To Protest Religious Council

NC2604075296 Paris AFP in English 2208 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, April 25 (AFP)—A Bahraini opposition group called Thursday [25 April] for a week-long campaign of civil disobedience to protest a decision to set up an Islamic council to control the Gulf state's religious affairs.

"The Bahraini people are called on to carry out civil disobedience from the first day of the 'Id al-Adha (Sunday) [28 April] until May 4," the statement from the Bahrain Freedom Movement said.

May 4 coincides with the 40th birthday of 'Isa Qambar, who was executed by firing squad in March for killing a police officer, it added.

"The creation of this council is a challenge to the Shiite Muslim doctrines," said the statement, signed by the movement's spokesman Shaykh Mansur al-Jamri, who has been living in exile in London for several months.

"I call on all the Shiite ulemas (theologians) inside Bahrain and abroad to boycott the council or hinder its orders," he said.

The creation of the council, the first of its kind, was announced on Wednesday [24 April] in a decree by Bahrain's amir 'Isa Bin-Salman. It is charged with supervising and "advising" on the running of the department in charge of religious property.

Until now only the Sunni Muslim religious leaders were appointed by the government. Shiites chose their own clerics.

Unrest erupted in Bahrain in December 1994 after the arrest of a Shiite cleric Shaykh 'Ali Salman, who called for the restoration of parliament suspended in 1975 by the Sunni-led authorities.

According to western estimates, the Shiite population of the Gulf archipelago outnumbers the Sunnis, who hold the strings of power.

Kuwait

Kuwait: Diplomatic Relations Established With Iceland

LD2604111596 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The State of Kuwait and the Republic of Iceland have decided to establish diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level in an effort to develop and strengthen the ties of friendship and cooperation. This cooperation will serve both countries' interests based on the sublime principles of the United Nations Charter and the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Nayif Hits West's Use of Opposition 'Tools'

MM2404113596 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 Apr 96 pp 1, 4

[Report by 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Khamis and Muhammad Sadiq: "Prince Nayif Says: We Tell Britain That Friends Do Not Insult Their Friends"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz has said that the case of the al-'Ulayya explosion in Riyadh has been referred to the judiciary, which will examine it like any other case, and that everyone has confidence in the judiciary, which will judge in accordance with God's law. Prince Nayif said that "those [oppositionists] abroad are trumpets and tools that have exhausted their hatred and hostility." We do not force any state — Britain or others — to break its own laws. They are in charge of matters in their countries, just as we are in charge of matters in our country. We distinguish between friend and foe, and between those seeking to maintain their interests with us and those who do not care about these interests. We can find whatever we need anywhere in the world. We say: Friends do not insult their friends.

Prince Nayif urged that the ideological invasion be fought, saying that "we should have ideological security and specialist and competent men to uproot such matters, clarify the facts to the people, and condemn such people, whether they are from here or abroad...citizens or not. Citizens should be loyal to their religion and homeland. This should be translated into actions...everyone according to his ability. No one should say anything that is unfounded."

He went on to say: "We were keen to be honest in conveying the truth about the event, and we actually let the persons concerned speak freely. Their society should know, in order to clarify matters."

On Saudi security policy after the arrest of the perpetrators, Prince Nayif said: "Praise be to God, the security policy and orientation is sound. If that was not the case, the recent results would not have been achieved. One should not forget that we are part of the world and anything can happen here. We rely on God and have confidence in His help. We have confidence in our men. Our

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uncovering what happened has not caused us to become arrogant or to believe that we can uncover anything or prevent anything from happening."

On those who smuggled explosives from Lebanon recently, Prince Nayif said: "No link has been established between the two incidents. We mean everything we say. We have the evidence. It is premature to talk now. When there is any information, we will not hesitate to reveal it. It is not right for us to say, 'we believe.' We should say, 'we are certain,' and submit the evidence. It is premature to talk now. We said that the [explosives] came from Lebanon. But from whom and how, this depends on the investigations, which are continuing."

On the influence of the bulletins published abroad on those who carried out the Riyadh explosion, Prince Nayif said: "I am confident that officials in Britain, Western security organs, and the foreign media know that what those people [oppositionists] say is a lie, but they are reluctant to talk about it, using feeble excuses. It is their right to care about their own laws and interests. However, the intentions and hatred emanating from some British people — especially the media and some MP's and government officials — are aimed against our faith, nation, and homeland. As for others, they have been used as tools. We do not interfere in or impose anything on them. We do not say that this or that law, or this or that policy, is wrong. It is their own business. But if they are going to say that we are friends, we say that friends do not insult their friends or harm their interests. They are saying that our state is shaky and our entity weak, when the reverse is true. They know that that is untrue and they are harming the Kingdom's interests. If that is in their interests, that is their business, but certainly it is not a friendly attitude. If they reveal facts of which we are aware, we will not be angry; we will respect them, even if we do not like them. But they are saying something that is not true and repeating obsolete lies and fabrications — which means there is hatred harbored toward the Kingdom. They are free in their hatred and love. Certainly they have their own views and interests. They know their country's affairs better than us. We say that this is not the attitude of someone who is saying that he has interests with Saudi Arabia or some Gulf states. We are not saying that we make no mistakes. We are like the rest of the world. We are not arrogant. But for them to come and say that we are applying God's Book and the Sunnah of His Prophet — we are proud of it and will continue to adhere to it, no matter what they say. We will defend our religion with our lives. Their criticism of Islam does not harm us, and the Islamic nation has ulema who can reply to them. We will not be affected by any talk about human rights; it will not dissuade us from applying God's law. Those [oppositionists] abroad are of no value inside the country, so what value do they have abroad? What matters is the people who have sponsored them and turned them into tools to say what they want them to say. When some Western media officials hear something positive about the Kingdom they do not reveal it, but they do when they hear something trivial."

Concluding, Prince Nayif said: "We are governed by our interests. This is our business. Everyone is responsible to his homeland, and no one else, in terms of right and wrong." [passage omitted]

Prince Nayid said: "My country has confidence in Almighty God and in the security officials and its loyal sons, who will surmount all obstacles and sinister attempts to undermine the security of both citizens and others residing in the country. And it [Saudi Arabia] is entitled to confront any attempt aimed at undermining the pillars of security in this secure, peaceful country, God willing."

Saudi Arabia: Libyan Aide Visits Riyadh, Meets Senior Officials

MM2604110396 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 26 Apr 96 pp 1, 6

[Report by Mustafa Shihab: "Libya Interested in Consolidating Relations With Saudi Arabia]

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh — Diplomatic sources in Riyadh said yesterday that Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi, member of the Libyan Revolution Command Council, conveyed during his meeting last Monday [22 April] with Saudi Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, first deputy prime minister and commander of the National Guard, a message to Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz from Libyan leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi "particularly stressing Libya's desire to develop Saudi-Libyan relations and to push them toward a new phase of fruitful cooperation between the two countries."

The diplomatic sources said that "the positive position adopted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the question of receiving the Libyan airliner that broke the air blockade imposed on Libya, taking 155 pilgrims, among them al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi himself, to Jeddah earlier this month, has consolidated Tripoli's awareness of the importance of reinforcing relations with Saudi Arabia, especially as Riyadh and Cairo, with which Tripoli has distinctive relations, represent the two major pivots in Arab relations with the outside world."

It is striking that al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi, who went to Saudi Arabia as a pilgrim on the same airliner and as a leader of the Libyan pilgrimage mission, met on one

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day (last Monday) with Prince 'Abdallah and Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Azi, second deputy prime minister and defense and aviation minister.

AL-HAYAH has learned that meetings with other senior Saudi officials, possibly including Interior Minister Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, are still on the agenda of the Libyan Revolution Command Council member.

The diplomatic sources told AL-HAYAH that al-Humaydi, apart from stressing Tripoli's desire for strong relations with Riyadh, is seeking through these meetings to clarify his country's position on the Lockerbie question and the sanctions imposed on it and also to stress that there are no chemical weapons factories on Libyan territory.

A Libyan diplomatic source stressed to AL-HAYAH in this context that his country welcomes any press and international delegations to visit the site that the United States says contains a chemical weapons factory, or any other sites.

As is known, Washington is accusing Tripoli of working to build a factory in Tarhunah to that end. But [Egyptian] President Husni Mubarak said that the proofs submitted to him by U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry are insufficient, stressing his country's opposition to any military action against Libya.

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Iraq: 'Heated Debate' Over U.S., UK 'Leaks' on UN Oil-for-Food Talks

JN2504202596

[FBIS Summary] Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic at 1847 GMT on 25 April presents an 18-minute program on the Iraq-UN oil-for-food talks. The program is presented by an unidentified announcer.

The announcer notes that a "memorandum of understanding" or "informal working paper" between Iraq and the United Nations was reached on 11 April and was about to be announced. However, the United States and Britain tried to prevent this announcement "for clear and familiar political purposes." The announcer says this was made clear yesterday during informal consultations at the United Nations. He says a report by Hans Corell, legal adviser to UN secretary general, to the Security Council contains a positive assessment of the Iraqi-UN talks and notes a conversation that took place between Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz and UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali.

The announcer says at during the 24 April consultations, many Security Council delegations protested the leaks to the media about the negotiations, which are supposed to be confidential. The announcer cites statements by the German ambassador to the United Nations, who said that Germany told the Security Council and Iraq that it will support an agreement. The announcer also cites an adviser to Butrus-Ghali as telling participants in yesterday's session that Butrus-Ghali is not satisfied with leakage of information about Iraq-UN negotiations.

The television announcer notes that the 24 April session was marked by a heated debate, especially when the Egyptian deputy UN ambassador read the statement by Tariq 'Aziz to the meeting participants. He quotes 'Aziz as saying: "The U.S. and British sides blatantly interfered in the minute details of the talks." The announcer also cites the Russian ambassador as criticizing interference in the Iraqi-UN talks. The announcer says that the British and U.S. ambassadors tried to defend the positions of their governments, noting that all those who spoke at the session criticized the U.S. and British attitudes. The announcer says that the oil-for-food dialogue will continue when UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali returns to New York.

Iraq: 'Informal Consultations' by Security Council Reported

JN2504175296 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Security Council held informal consultations yesterday afternoon. During these consultations, Hans Corell, legal adviser to the UN secretary general, briefed the participants on the outcome of the third round of dialogue with Iraq on selling oil to purchase food, medicine, and other necessities. Diplomatic sources who attended the three-hour consultations described them as heated and said that 13 out of the 15 Security Council members expressed bitterness and dissatisfaction with some nations' violation of the privacy of the talks, which was agreed to at the start of the talks between Iraq and the United Nations. The third round of talks began on 8 April.

Most ambassadors from permanent and nonpermanent member states expressed dissatisfaction with the conduct of the U.S. and British delegations during the dialogue sessions between Iraq and the United Nations. These two delegations interfered directly in the progress of the talks between Iraq and the United Nations to prevent their success.

In another development, the Russian ambassador was angry as he left the consultations. He told reporters: I have been saying for several weeks that no one should interfere in the private talks between the two parties. He said that he is not the only envoy who made his country's position clear to the U.S. and British delegations. All those who spoke made the same point.

Diplomatic quarters at the United Nations said that the U.S. and British ambassadors have taken a weak defensive position, which is evident from their statements to reporters after the consultations — to an extent that suggests that they have abandoned the public relations campaign they launched on 23 April.

Iraqi television will present a detailed report at 2200 [1800 GMT] tonight which it will disclose the informal consultations that took place at the Security Council session to expose the interference of the U.S. and British envoys in the dialogue between Iraq and the United Nations.

Iraq: Intelligence Chief Reportedly Visits Egypt 'Secretly' on UN Talks

NC2604090496 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 22 Apr 96 p 7

[FBIS Translated Text] The chief of the Iraqi Intelligence Service visited Cairo secretly and discussed with Egyptian officials the possibility of pressuring UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali to accede to Iraq's request that the distribution of aid to the Kurds be in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 968 on food-for-oil for the Iraqi Government.

The Iraqi intelligence chief promised Egypt to resolve the issue of financial compensation to former Egyptian

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workers in Iraq who have not received payment for seven years.

Iraq: Talabani Views Talks With Visiting U.S. Delegation

NC2504162496 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In his office in Irbil, Jalal Talabani, Secretary General of Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], on Wednesday, 24 April received AFP correspondent Mali Guiliata [name as heard], who interviewed him on the current situation in Kurdistan and the region.

In response to a question, Talabani noted that a U.S. mediation team visited Kurdistan in the past few days. Consultations were held with the visiting delegation over the following four main points:

1. The U.S. stance vis-a-vis the Iraqi regime. In this respect, the United States continues to back the struggle of the Iraqi peoples against the dictatorial regime and rejects the question of negotiating with this regime, as was recently suggested.

2. The reconciliation between the PUK and the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP]. In this regard, members of the U.S. mediation team d[illegible]ssed the practical measures that seek to resolve the outstanding problems and achieve peace. They reiterated their stance that calls for prolonging the cease-fire. As for us, Talabani added, we have affirmed that we support a peaceful and political solution of differences and are ready to mobilize our efforts in this regard. We have also expressed our readiness to sign the agreement here in Kurdistan, Ankara, Washington, or anywhere else. Our views were identical on the peace process, he added.

3. Regarding Resolution 986, the United States has explained its stance on this issue by emphasizing the need not to give the Iraqi regime the chance to circumvent the text of the resolution and that the substance of the resolution must be implemented as it is.

4. We discussed the question of the security of the Turkish borders and stressed to the visiting delegation that we are eager to establish strong neighborly relations with all neighboring countries without exception.

The interview lasted for one hour.

Iraq: PUK Leader Meets Visiting U.S. Delegation

NC2504161196 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A U.S. delegation led by Robert Deutsch, official in charge of the northern Gulf affairs in the U.S. State Department, yesterday visited the headquarters of Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], before the U.S. team's departure from Kurdistan back to its country. [passage omitted]

Deutsch once again affirmed his deep interest in the question of peace and stability in Kurdistan. He praised the efforts of the two parties [PUK and Kurdistan Democratic Party] to stabilize the cease-fire. He added that this will facilitate the peace process in the region, something that the United States is quietly planning in conjunction with its allies.

At the end of the meeting, the visiting delegation was given a warm farewell by Talabani and the PUK leaders. The delegation expressed its thanks and appreciation for the warm reception and the hospitality given to it by the PUK and its Secretary General Jalal Talabani. The delegation lauded the PUK's peaceful stances.

Iraq: 'Huge Explosion' Reported in al-Basrah 21 Apr

JN2504143496 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A huge explosion destroyed the al-Asma'i Youth Federation headquarters in al-Basrah on 21 April. Islamic revolution sources said the strugglers planted a 6-kg explosive charge inside the al-Asma'i Youth Federation headquarters. The charge went off at 0600 [0200 GMT] on 21 April, destroying the entire building. The same sources added that the explosion was heard in the city of al-Basrah. The tyrant's henchmen panicked.

The sources said the operation was meant to prevent the regime from holding an orgiastic celebration at the federation's building on the occasion of the tyrant's desecration of the city of al-Basrah. The celebration is part of a larger program in which the regime forces the citizens to attend events to reflect a false image of the defunct regime.

Iraq: New Anti-Saddam Radio Starts 'Experimental' Broadcasting

JN2404183896

[FBIS Report] Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic on 23 April publishes on page 20 the following report entitled "Iraqi Radio for the National Accord Movement:"

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"London—The Iraqi National Accord Movement has announced that on 21 April it started an experimental transmission for a new Iraqi radio station that will contribute to the battle to topple the Iraqi regime.

"The Movement said that the new radio station, called al-Mustaqbal, will broadcast in the first stage on two mediumwaves: 1035 and 1008 kHz, and in two transmission periods. The first period will be from 0600 to 0800 Baghdad time [0200-0400 GMT] and the second from 2300 to 0100 Baghdad time [1900-2100 GMT].

"Dr. Iyad 'Alawi, the Movement's secretary general, described al-Mustaqbal radio as an Iraqi voice expressing the Iraqi people's aspirations and their national desire to get rid of the current regime and realize their aim in achieving freedom, democracy, and reconstruction."

On 23 April the radio appeared suddenly on the air with music in progress. A minute later, the following announcement was made:

"This is al-Mustaqbal, the radio of the Iraqi National Accord. This is the radio of all of Iraq, the radio of the people who reject oppression, injustice, and dictatorship."

The last announcement heard on the radio at 2100 GMT was given by a woman announcer in Iraqi dialect. It said: "This is al-Mustaqbal, the radio of the Iraqi National Accord. How are you brothers? You are welcome. Our radio, al-Mustaqbal, is heard today and every day at this time. This radio airs your worries and difficulties, which are black clouds that must be cleared away. Everything has to come to an end. These difficulties will become tales to tell your children. Saddam the butcher has prevented us from enjoying anything. But I will tell you that the sweet days are not far off. But just say with me: Inshallah, if God wills. I tell you that rain is going to drop on our fields and make them green like your hearts, my dear ones."

The announcement was followed by a man reading poetry in Iraqi dialect. Then the woman announcer said:

"May God help you. How are you dear ones? We pray God to grant you patience in this ordeal. We are waiting for the day when we will fill our lungs with clear air without a tyrant like Saddam breathing down our backs and suffocating us. Our radio is a clear whiff of fresh air to revive us."

The man reading poetry then added: "O folks, we are fed up, by the great God we are fed up. How can this lousy man continue to rule over us? We cannot wait any longer and the solution is really in our hands."

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Israel: Peres To Make Planned U.S. Trip

TA2504152996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] There are increasing signs that an agreement is near to end the Israeli-Hizballah conflict. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has been meeting in Damascus with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad. The two men held a first session, and the president's spokesman said after a break they would meet again.

In Jerusalem, the Prime Minister's Office says that Shim'on Peres will travel to the United States on Saturday [27 April] night as scheduled. Diplomatic sources say that very difficult bargaining is taking place over two clauses in the understanding. David Ze'ev reports:

[Ze'ev] If the violence on both sides of the border was not enough to rush an agreement, religious considerations may just do the trick. Diplomatic sources in Israel say an agreement must be wrapped up by the weekend. In the words of one source: Today and tomorrow will be decisive; we are reaching the conclusion of the negotiations. Said another source: First we have the Jewish Sabbath, tomorrow night and Saturday, and then we have the four-day Muslim feast of 'Id al-Adha, Sunday through Wednesday. Secretary Christopher could go to Damascus on the Jewish Sabbath and return to Israel Saturday night, but the source asked rhetorically: What then? [passage omitted]

Israeli diplomatic sources say there is very difficult haggling taking place on two clauses in the understanding aimed at bringing calm to the border area. The sources say Israel wants more of an assurance that katyusha rockets will not be fired into northern Israel and that the Israelis will have the right to operate if the understanding is violated.

Israel: Baraq—Only 24 Hours Remain for Achievement of Agreement

TA2504153496 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has announced that he is going back to Washington tomorrow.

Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq told IDF Radio that there are only 24 hours left for the attainment of an agreement of understandings on a cease-fire, which is up to Syrian President al-Asad. Should his reply be negative, Baraq warned, we will increase our pressure on Lebanon.

[Begin Baraq recording] There are difficult points. We insist on the issues essential for us, and I believe that in a few hours, perhaps 24 hours, we will see: Either there is a result — meaning a situation where no katyushas are fired at the Galilee and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is free to act against Hizballah in the security zone — or there is no solution, in which case we will find ourselves in a process that forces us to increase the pressure on the Lebanese Government. [end recording]

Israel: Iran Said 'Ready To Help End' Fighting in Lebanon

TA2504112496 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 25 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Steve Rodan]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Iran stands ready to help end the fighting in south Lebanon but has been rebuffed by both the US and Israel, an Iranian source who lives in the West told THE JERUSALEM POST last night.

The source, who is regarded as close to President Hashemi Rafsanjani, said Iran had regarded the battle between Hizballah and Israel as an opportunity to prove to the US its ability to restrain its Shiite client and win political points with Washington.

But the Clinton administration, the source said, has dismissed the prospects of Iranian-US talks and instead has focused its efforts on convincing Syria to achieve a cease-fire in south Lebanon.

"This decision is not correct," the Iranian source said. "(Syrian President Hafiz) al-Asad is not as powerful as he is perceived by the Americans. He is much more vulnerable to Iranian pressure than is commonly thought."

The source said Iran uses Hizballah to extend its influence in the Arab world but has no lasting commitment to the group.

The Iranian supply of Hizballah, the source said, is meant to remind Washington of Tehran's importance in achieving Arab-Israeli peace.

Israeli military sources say Iran continues to send Katyusha rockets and other equipment to Hizballah. The equipment is flown to Damascus from Iran and then sent by trucks to the al-Biqa' and Beirut.

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Israel: Generals on IDF Raids, Hizballah Fire, Qana Incident

TA2504153196 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 25 Apr 96

[Report by army affairs correspondent Avi Lifshitz — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Lifshitz] We will start with an update on IDF [Israel Defense Forces] activities in south Lebanon: This afternoon, Air Force planes raided a base of Ahmad Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command [PFLP] in the al-Biqa' area, which is under Syrian control. Major General Moshe Ya'alon, head of the Intelligence Branch, said that the base in Jabal Bayadah was a PFLP ammunition storage. The organization has so far given hundreds of katyusha rockets to Hizballah. The IDF feared that the katyushas stored in this base will also be given to Hizballah, following a Syrian order. All day today, Air Force planes and helicopters raided other terrorist targets north of the security zone.

Speaking at a Tel Aviv news conference this afternoon, Maj. Gen. Matan Vilna'i, deputy chief of staff, again said that, due to constant IDF attacks, Hizballah firing positions have been pushed farther from the Israeli border and that their fire is therefore much less accurate. According to him, attacks in recent days have led to interesting changes on the ground.

[Vilna'i] Our pressure eventually led to the first signs of activity against the launchers of katyushas and Hizballah squads by the Lebanese Army and the local population, which would prefer that katyushas not be fired from the vicinity of their villages because they know that IDF artillery fire at them will soon follow. These signs are in line with our efforts over the past two weeks.

[Lifshitz] On the 15th day of Operation Grapes of Wrath, our correspondent Yariv Ben-Yehuda again heard Gen. Vilna'i urge patience until the operation ends.

[Vilna'i] We must see the full picture, close a full circle, and only then will we know what we are up against. When we said it will be long, we meant it. I know that many believed it would be over soon. We ourselves know, but I suggest that everyone understand that it will be long. We will carry out our plan fully, subject to the instructions we receive from the echelons above us.

[Lifshitz] Hizballah has so far fired some 700 katyushas — 200 at the security zone and some 500 into Israel. Many of the rockets, as said before, were given to Hizballah by the PFLP. Intelligence chief Moshe Ya'alon revealed this afternoon that some 50 Hizballah activists have been killed by IDF fire so far, contrary to Hizballah statements that only nine of its members have so far been killed.

The generals were also asked about the incident in the village of Qana, in which some 100 Lebanese refugees were killed last week. Gen. Ya'alon rejected criticism leveled over the past few days at the Intelligence Branch, alleging that Northern Command intelligence did not know that hundreds of civilians were packed into the Qana camp:

[Ya'alon] The one who did not know of the presence of such a number of civilians in Qana was the officer who decided to open fire in that direction. The fact that civilians who are evacuated from their villages find refuge in UN posts was not knew. We had known this since the second day of the operation. Intelligence knew.

[Lifshitz] Gen. Vilna'i made it clear that the investigating officer is still working on the Qana village incident, and his conclusions will probably be presented to the public when the probe is completed.

Israel: Withdrawal From Hebron, Final Status Talks To Start 5 May

TA2604082196 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 26 Apr 96 pp 1, 9

[Report by Roni Shaqed and the army affairs correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will withdraw from Hebron on 5 May. The first meeting of the negotiations on the permanent status between Israel and the Palestinians will be held that same day, and the evacuation of the city will conclude the interim phase of the Oslo agreements. [A report by Yosi Levi on pages 1 and 2 of Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 26 April notes that the IDF pullout will take place on 1 May.]

The IDF is ready to evacuate the city on 10 hours' notice from the moment the political level gives the order.

Postevacuation Hebron will remain a single entity with two authorities. The Palestinian zone will consist of 85 percent of the city's territory, while the rest will be under Israel's security control, with the Cave of the Patriarchs at its center. Some 15,000 Palestinians and 500 Israelis, including 180 yeshiva students, live in the "Israeli" zone. The number of troops protecting the settlers will be based on a ratio of two soldiers per settler. [passage omitted]

Tariq Zayd, commander of the Palestinian Police in the Hebron Hills District, called on settlers in the area to maintain a dialogue with the Palestinian Authority

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to find a way to peacefully coexist. Zayd told our correspondent that he had approached the settlers on the issue through the Israeli commander of Hebron. "So far I have had no response from the settlers," he said. Our correspondent has learned that the settlers discussed the issue and decided to accept the proposal in principle and hold a meeting.

The National Religious Party faction has called for an urgent Knesset session to discuss the evacuation of Hebron. Knesset Member Hanan Porat said that the IDF's pullout from Hebron would be "a tragedy that we will regret forever and ever." [passage omitted]

Israel: Territories Closure Extended Until 28 Apr

TA2604091296 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0400 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The closure on Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza has been extended, and it is to continue in its current form until 0400 [0100 GMT] on 28 April.

Today only workers are allowed into the Erez industrial zone, while any traffic of goods is prohibited.

Israel: Woman Wounded by Katyusha; SLA Soldier Hurt in Explosion

TA2504132096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Katyushas continued to land in the Galilee this afternoon. In the Galilee Panhandle, a woman was slightly wounded when a katyusha rocket landed in front of the bus she was driving. She was wounded when the window glass shattered. This was reported by our correspondent Ilan Ro'e.

Several katyusha rockets landed also in the western Galilee in the past hour. Nobody was hurt and no damage was caused.

In Marj 'Uyun, an SLA [South Lebanese Army] soldier who was on guard duty at the gate of the Liaison Unit With Lebanon base was slightly wounded when an explosive charge blew up at the site.

Israel: Katyusha Causes Damage; Air Force Reports Accurate Hits

TA2604032996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A katyusha rocket was fired at Western Galilee last night. Our correspondent Pe'erli Shahar reports that damage was caused.

The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman has announced that Air Force planes raided terrorist targets in five south Lebanon locations last night. The pilots reported accurate hits. All the planes returned safely to base.

Israel: 2 Slightly Injured, Damage From 2d Katyusha Volley

TA2604073596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Two people were slightly injured by a volley of katyusha rockets that landed in the Galilee Panhandle about an hour ago. Our correspondent Ilan Ro'e reports that the rockets hit a Galilee Panhandle factory which sustained serious damage. The plant had been hit by katyushas once before in the course of Operation Grapes of Wrath.

Israel: Poll Shows Peres Retaining Lead in Premiership Race

TA2604081996 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 26 Apr 96 p 4

[Public opinion poll conducted by the Dahaf Institute directed by Dr. Mina Tzemah]

[FBIS Translated Text] Question: Were elections to the premiership held today and the candidates were Shim'on Peres and Binyamin Netanyahu, for whom would you vote? (The answers are quoted in percentage points, with the findings of the 19 April poll given in brackets)

Answer: Peres — 49 (50); Netanyahu — 44 (45); did not reply/undecided — 7 (5).

Question: Were elections to the Knesset held today, for which party would you vote? (The answers are quoted in Knesset seats, with the findings of the 19 April poll given in brackets)

Party	Forecast	Current Knesset
Labor	42-43 (44)	44
Likud, Tzomet, Gesher	42 (42)	40
Meretz	6-7 (6)	12
Moledet	3 (2)	3
National Religious Party	6 (5)	6
United Torah Jewry	4 (4)	4
SHAS	4-5 (4-5)	6
HADASH, ADP, al-Tibi	7 (7)	5 without al-Tibi
The Third Way	1-2 (1-2)	—
Yisra'el Ba'aliya	3 (4)	—

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[Key to abbreviations: SHAS (Torah Observing Sephardim); HADASH (Democratic Front for Peace and Equality); ADP (Arab Democratic Party)]

The poll was conducted on 25 April, after the decision to cancel the clauses in the Palestinian Charter was announced, among 773 respondents who constitute a representative sample of Israel's adult population. The maximum margin of error is 4 percent.

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Jordan: King Welcomes PLO Charter Decision, Leaves for Pretoria

JN2504114796 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1100 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] His Majesty King Husayn has left for South Africa on an official visit lasting for several days. Speaking before departure, the king said he will head Jordan's delegation to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. The king added that his trip to Pretoria and his meeting with South African President Nelson Mandela stem from Jordan's respect and appreciation of the role he plays at the international level. His majesty expressed hope that the visit would lead to promoting joint cooperation in various areas for the benefit of both sides.

On the situation in Lebanon, the king said he hopes that a comprehensive solution to the Lebanese problem will be secured and that ongoing efforts would yield positive results.

His majesty welcomed the decision by the Palestine National Council to amend the PLO Charter, stressing that Jordan respects the move and wishes it success.

His majesty the king was seen off by their Royal Highnesses Prince Muhammad, Crown Prince Hasan, Prince Ghazi, and Prince 'Ali, as well as the prime minister, the speakers of parliament, and a number of top civic and military officials. Earlier His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan took the constitutional oath as regent during his majesty's absence abroad. The king is accompanied on the visit by His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah, the chief of the Royal Court, and the ministers of industry and trade and planning.

Jordan: Palestinian Envoy—'Arafat Definitely To Visit Soon

JN2604104896 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 26 Apr 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman—'Umar al-Khatib, Palestinian ambassador and representative of the Palestinian National Authority to Jordan, said that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat will definitely visit Jordan soon to meet with his majesty the king to coordinate and consult with him in light of the current phase of the Palestinian cause in particular, and the Arab region in general.

Al-Khatib denied the validity of the document published by local [Jordanian] papers and said to have been forwarded to President 'Arafat.

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Lebanon: Birri, al-Hariri Meet Christopher in Damascus

NC2504164396 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1626 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of States Warren Christopher began a meeting in Damascus this evening with Lebanese Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri. They are discussing efforts to achieve a cease-fire in Lebanon. An AFP correspondent said the talks, which are being held in al-Hariri's house in the Syrian capital, followed a meeting between the Lebanese officials and Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam.

Lebanon: Birri, al-Hariri, Christopher End Meetings; Ross Comments

NC2504185196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1834 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Here is a report from the news desk: The meeting in Damascus between Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in the presence of Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator of the Middle East peace process, and Assistant U.S. Secretary of State Robert Pelletreau ended a short time ago.

Christopher did not make any statement after the meeting that lasted two hours and 15 minutes, but Ross said that there are still difficulties and that the opportunities for a solution still exist. He added: We are eager to reach a cease-fire. That's all we have received so far.

Lebanon: French Foreign Minister Optimistic About Agreement

NC2504133696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1300 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette expressed optimism over the progress of the ongoing contacts to bring about a cease-fire, but noted that some obstacles remain.

Following his meeting with Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, de Charette stressed that the agreement to be reached should be a prelude to the resumption of the peace negotiations in a way that enables Lebanon to recover its sovereignty over all its territory and ensures security on both sides of the Lebanese-Israeli border.

A French foreign ministry spokesman said Minister de Charette telephoned Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres and stressed the need to reach a quick agreement to end the fighting in Lebanon. The spokesman said that Peres told de Charette that there are still issues that must be resolved, especially with regard to the matter of the security committee that will supervise the implementation of the cease-fire agreement. He noted that the problem is not who will be included on the committee but one of forming such a committee and starting its work.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz, for his part, said Lebanon accepts, in principle, the spirit and contents of the French initiative submitted by the French foreign minister.

In an interview with the Tunisian paper AL-SHURUQ, Buwayz said Lebanon has asked for explanations and amendments, and that he is waiting for a reply from Paris — especially on the issue of Israel's response to this initiative and to the demands for Israeli withdrawal, for immediately halting Israeli military operations against Lebanon, and for responding positively to the spirit and letter of Resolution 425.

Lebanon: Russian Official Meets al-Hariri, Comments

NC2504142296 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The deputy Russian Foreign Minister has said that Russia supports all the initiatives to resolve the situation in Lebanon so that it will be a peaceful, quick, and lasting settlement.

Following his meeting with Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri in the presence of Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, the Russian official said that his country can participate in the guarantees and be a member of any committee that could be formed.

Lebanon: Velayati on Need for Hizballah Agreement, Observers

NC2504162696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati held talks in Beirut today with Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri and Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri. At a news conference after the meeting, he said the expected cease-fire agreement includes the establishment of an observers committee to supervise the cease-fire. There is a need for observers from many countries, including France, he said.

Velayati added: The discussions seek to reach an agreement or an understanding that is no less than that achieved in July 1993. There will be no solution without the agreement of the Lebanese Government, people, and Hizballah.

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Lebanon: Iranian Foreign Minister Meets With Russia's Posuvalyuk

LD2504182596 Tehran IRNA in English 1801 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, April 25, IRNA — Russian Deputy Foreign Minister, Viktor Posuvalyuk, during a meeting with Iran's Foreign Minister, 'Ali Akbar Velayati, on Thursday [25 April] submitted the message of Russian Foreign Minister, Yevgeniy Primakov to Velayati.

The meeting with Russian deputy foreign minister took place after the meeting with Lebanese officials at the residence of Iran's foreign minister in Beirut.

The two sides stressed cooperation and continuous exchange of views between Iran and Russia until the the termination of Lebanese crisis.

Iran's foreign minister is currently in Lebanon in an effort to help resolve the problems faced by Lebanon as the result of the Zionist continued aggression against that country.

Lebanon: Iranian Foreign Minister Departs for Damascus 25 Apr

LD2604074596 Tehran IRNA in English 0718 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, April 26, IRNA — Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati wound up his one-day visit to Lebanon and left here for Damascus on Thursday [25 April].

Velayati said that the goal behind his visit to Beirut was to voice Iran's full support for Lebanese Government and nation, who have valiantly stood against brutal aggression of the Zionist regime.

"We have reiterated that we stand beside the Lebanese Government and nation and consider helping the Lebanese people in reconstructing the war-damaged areas as our duty," he said.

Velayati said the important message of the leader of Islamic revolution Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i to the Lebanese Government and nation as well as Lebanese hizballah and Islamic resistance was constructive and strong indicating the extent the leader cared for the nation and people of Lebanon.

On his assessment of developments in Lebanon, he said the Lebanese Government and nation have stood against Zionists' pressures and with regards to this fact, the Muslim and Arab world have shown considerable solidarity with the Lebanese people.

Undoubtedly, he added, the resistance and oppressedness of the Lebanese people have unveiled the nature of Zionism so that even the public opinion of non-Islamic and non-Arab countries have voiced their hatred towards the criminal performance of the enemy.

As for the ongoing efforts aimed to end military assaults on Lebanon by Zionist regime, Velayati stressed that any understanding should enjoy an execution guarantee.

All countries concerned should guarantee that the enemy would not violate the understanding again because based on available documents, the Zionist regime has violated the 1993 accord for more than 230 times.

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Cancels Cabinet Meeting, Leaves for Damascus

NC2604082196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0805 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has canceled the Cabinet's extraordinary meeting and left Beirut for Damascus for talks with high-ranking Syrian officials on developments in the ongoing talks to stop the Israeli attacks on south Lebanon. In Damascus, Prime Minister al-Hariri will meet U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who is expected to arrive from Israel today.

Lebanon: Cabinet, Chamber To Convene 26 Apr

NC2604065396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0646 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the newsdesk: The Council of Ministers will hold an extraordinary session at the Government Palace at 1000 [0700 GMT]. The session, which will be chaired by Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, will discuss developments.

Chamber Speaker Nabih Birri has called on the heads of committees and parliamentary blocs to meet at the Chamber's premises at 1100 today.

Lebanon: Official Source Comments on Mideast Peace Proposal

BR2504142096 Paris LE MONDE in French 25 Apr 96 p 3

[Report by Francoise Chipaux: "A Cease-Fire in Lebanon Is Tied to the Guarantees Called For by the Protagonists"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] On Tuesday, 23 April, a cease-fire did not appear to be close to being established in Lebanon, with each of the protagonists in the conflict seeking to secure specific guarantees for the future, Syria primarily seeking to obtain certain preconditions

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for resuming the peace process. Now that a wider range of subjects is being discussed, the negotiations are all the more complicated. [passage omitted]

Supervision

According to one official Lebanese source, the talks with a view to achieving a cease-fire are stumbling over "Lebanon's attachment to its legitimate right to resistance." In its initial version, the U.S. plan stressed that "if the Israeli forces in the (occupied — LE MONDE editor's note) security zone in southern Lebanon are attacked from territory situated to the north of this zone, they shall have the right to fire back at the source of the attack, even if this source is situated in villages or in inhabited areas." To a certain extent that would institutionalize the Israeli reprisals and leave a permanent threat hanging over the civilians, unless all Hizballah actions from territory under Beirut's control were banned, although Beirut refuses to impose such a ban.

The agreement sought, the same source added, "would not be written, but would consist in an undertaking made by the two parties (in this instance Israel and Lebanon, not Hizballah — LE MONDE editor's note) in front of a committee of several countries assigned to supervise it." France, which came up with the idea of setting up a Security Committee has proposed that it, the United States, and Syria be included among the countries assigned to monitor the agreement. On the other hand, the U.S. plan assigns this role to the United States alone. Washington, which is against sending in observers on the ground, is said to be proposing a supervisory committee, comprising the Syrian and Israeli — and maybe Lebanese — ambassadors to the United States, as well as a U.S. general officer, headquartered in Washington, the observation on the ground being taken care of primarily by satellite photographs.

After a talk on Tuesday with his Syrian counterpart, Faruq al-Shar', French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette, who has been striving to secure a cease-fire for 10 days now, went on to Tel Aviv, and then returned to Damascus that same evening where he was due to be received once again by President al-Asad on Wednesday. After a meeting in Tel Aviv with Yosi Beilin, Israeli minister in charge of the peace process, Mr. de Charette reported on the progress made, but added that "the talks are complex and the road is not an easy one." Admitting for the first time that France could play a useful role, Mr. Beilin said that "the fact that third parties are prepared to help stabilize the situation is extremely important. [passage omitted]

Lebanon: Hizballah Chief Views U.S. Mediation, Party Demands

NC2504182696 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 25 Apr 96

[Interview with Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah by correspondent Thana' al-Imam in Damascus — date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Nasrallah] The first U.S. initiative that was talked about was not really an initiative but an attempt to dictate Israeli terms on Lebanon. It was a wily political exploitation of the Israeli military aggression.

[Al-Imam] You mean the first U.S. initiative that was amended?

[Nasrallah] Yes. Now I do not believe that there is a U.S. initiative but a U.S. mediation. The U.S. Secretary of State is conveying the views of the parties, is trying to find something common among them, and is trying to coordinate things so that the parties may reach a specific result or a certain understanding.

[Al-Imam] Your imminence: What are the real points of difference over the ideas conveyed to you by the Americans?

[Nasrallah] We can never accept any formula that guarantees the security of civilians in northern Palestine and ignores the security of civilians in Lebanon. What concerns us from all the initiatives being discussed is that the resistance continues its activity to eliminate the occupation and that our civilians in Lebanon be protected.

Lebanon: Buwayz Returns, Comments on al-Hirawi's U.S. Talks

NC2604085896 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0710 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz, a member of the delegation accompanying the president of the Republic in New York, returned to Beirut this morning.

Minister Buwayz said at the airport:

[Begin recording] [Buwayz] Naturally, we resorted to the General Assembly because we realized that it is less likely to give in to the kind of pressure that is normally exercised on the Security Council. With this resolution, the General Assembly asserted and proved further credibility in dealing with global conflicts and issues. It remains for the UN agencies—the General Secretariat and others—to adopt and implement this resolution. This resolution needs to be implemented, not

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to be added to the numerous resolutions kept in UN filing cabinets. We believe the United Nations must act as an authority to be referred to with regard to right and justice. Despite prevailing world developments, countries like Lebanon must exert the necessary effort to back this United Nations' role so that it will remain the point of reference on matters of authority.

[Unidentified correspondent] The United States considered the positions of the countries that supported your [words indistinct].

[Buwayz] Of course we regard the countries that did not vote in Lebanon's favor as being partial. It is no secret to anyone who attacked Lebanon and why the aggression was committed. Anyone who lacked the courage to stand by Lebanon in this issue yielded to pressure, not the contrary.

[Correspondent] But the United States said the countries that supported Lebanon were [word indistinct].

[Buwayz] The answer also applies to the U.S. role.

[Correspondent] The meeting between Presidents Clinton and al-Hirawi has left an impact on Lebanon and on the peace process.

[Buwayz] This meeting expresses President Clinton's concern. Clinton sought this meeting to listen to the president of the Republic's briefing on what is taking place on the ground. I believe the statements by the president of the Republic and the information he conveyed to President Clinton at the White House should highlight and explain events so that things are not relayed only by those world media that are normally influenced by Israel.

I believe the visit was fundamental and crucial. It is obvious that through his new talk, rather, the talk about Resolution 425, which has been absent from the United States' mouth for years, President Clinton realized that this resolution constitutes the best mechanism to end the existing dispute. I think the visit reemphasized the significance of Resolution 425.

We heard President Clinton talk about the United States' realization of Lebanon's future role and its role in any equation in this region, be it political, economic, cultural, or humanitarian. Proceeding from this point, I imagine that this visit was very successful and is bound to produce the desired results.

[Correspondent] Secretary Christopher is conducting a tour via diplomatic channels. Have you been informed of an imminent (?solution)? Reports today indicate that Secretary Christopher told the parties concerned that he will pack his suitcase and return to Washington if a solution cannot be reached.

[Buwayz] What is being discussed is based on the principle of finding a transitional, temporary formula to end the excesses in the fighting in the south. What is proposed is a mechanism proceeding from a principle of protecting civilians, in other words, for Israel to refrain from and be committed to not bombarding civilian areas in exchange for a Resistance commitment not to fire rockets across the border.

If this principle was in the so-called 1993 understanding, a new mechanism was necessary to oversee the commitment to this understanding. I believe this is what is happening. I believe this solution must not contradict Resolution 425 and should not be a permanent thing. It should be a transitional practical solution ensuring transitional calm, as far as possible.

[Correspondent] Minister, will you....

[Buwayz, interrupting] I arrived a moment ago. I will hold some contacts and in light of these I may or may not make such a move. [end recording]

Lebanon: Al-Hirawi Undergoes 'Successful' Operation in Boston

NC2504172296 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY team in New York has reported that President Ilyas al-Hirawi's health is good and that he spent a normal day following the successful operation he underwent in a hospital in Boston.

The president is due to return to Beirut early next week.

Lebanon: Southerners Said Opposed to Syria's 'Maneuvers'

NC2504125996 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1213 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] We have just received the following:

You hear the voices coming from Damascus saying that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad is not speeding up the negotiations and is ready to prolong indefinitely the negotiations on a cease-fire in Lebanon.

The 400,000 inhabitants of the south, the people who have been forced to leave their houses because of the policies of Damascus and Tehran, which encourage Hizballah to use civilians as human shields, are not partners in the Syrian maneuvers. These people want an immediate halt to the Grapes of Wrath operation; they do not want it to continue. They want security and peace; they do not want the fighting to continue. They want to return to their houses and do not want to

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remain displaced in strange places. They want Hizballah to stay away from their houses and villages and not use them as human shields. They do not want Damascus and Tehran to conduct their wars on their land, but away from Lebanon's territory. They want an honorable Israeli-Lebanese settlement that satisfies the two sides' interests. They are against being a card in the hands of foreign parties, whether these parties are in Damascus or Tehran. They want independence and sovereignty and do not want to be under Damascus' control and Tehran's hegemony.

The inhabitants of the south know that if the Syrians let Hizballah return and continue its terrorist operations, then these inhabitants' fate will be a miserable one.

The inhabitants of the south, who fear for their future, are appealing to the Syrian president to stop the maneuvers and to exert every effort to reach a settlement immediately, one that takes into account the interests of the inhabitants of the south and all the Lebanese people who are looking for a calm, peaceful, and prosperous life away from the sound of guns and bullets and away from the plots of leaders and politicians.

Lebanon: SLA Commander—Operation 'Cannot Totally Stop' Katyushas

NC2504211796 Paris AFP in English 1730 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Marj'uyun, Lebanon, April 25 (AFP) — Israel's Operation Grapes of Wrath will fail to halt Hizballah katyusha rocket attacks on northern Israel, the head of the Israeli proxy militia in south Lebanon said Thursday [25 April].

"The operation underway cannot totally stop the katyusha attacks," said Antoine Lahd, commander of the Israeli-trained and financed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia in Israel's self-declared "security zone" in south Lebanon.

"The real aim of the operation is to put pressure on the Lebanese and Syrian governments so that they can find a modus vivendi" with Israel, he added.

"The Israelis don't know when the operation will stop and it will be very difficult for them if they don't obtain a positive result," he told AFP at his headquarters in the Israeli-occupied buffer strip.

"Israel is not willing to stop before obtaining a lasting and efficient arrangement," he added.

He criticized an unwritten accord between Israel and Hizballah brokered by the United States in 1993 to end a one-week Israeli bombardment of south Lebanon, as a "mistake" and a "lame agreement."

And he said Israel did not want a repeat performance this time round.

Lahd, who is in permanent contact with Israeli army officers and political leaders, expected the Jewish state to adopt new measures if diplomatic efforts to broker a cease-fire fail.

"When? How? I don't know. All I know is that Israel moves in steps and the next stage could be more important," Lahd said, without ruling out the bombardment of some neighborhoods in Beirut.

But he excluded any land operation saying "that would not resolve the problem, for the Hizballah does not have fixed positions and it would expose the Israeli infantry to risks without hope of any gains."

Lebanon: Radio Updates Casualty Toll of Israeli Operation

NC2504203996 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2024 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] There were a total of approximately 60 Israeli air raids today. More than 500 shells fell on more than 30 southern villages as well as the coastal road in Tyre and al-Awwali. Ten civilians were wounded by today's shelling, seven in Yatar and three on the coastal road. A Palestinian was wounded during the raid on central al-Biqa' region. [passage omitted]

The casualty toll from the Israeli military operations against Lebanon has reached 163 dead, all but 14 are civilians, of whom nine are Hizballah fighters, four Lebanese military personnel, and a Syrian soldier. The number of wounded has reached 350.

Lebanon: Israeli Helicopters Raiding Srifa

NC2504120796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1124 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the editors desk: Israeli helicopters are launching several raids on the town of Srifa. The Amal movement antiaircraft guns are confronting these helicopters. In the meantime, Israeli military aircraft and helicopters are flying over Tyre and the western and central sectors.

Lebanon: Israeli Aircraft Raid PFLP-GC Positions Near Syrian Border

NC2504132396 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1303 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This just in from the news desk: Our correspondent has reported that Israeli aircraft a few minutes ago launched a new raid on Kafr Zabad, only 10 km from the Lebanese-Syrian border. The

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raid targeted positions of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC]. Our correspondent said intense columns of smoke are seen rising in the skies over the area. While no losses have been reported yet, two ambulances went to the scene and evacuated one of the wounded.

Lebanon: Israeli Planes Raid DFLP Base in Central al-Biqa'

NC2504135296 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1338 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This is a new report from the news desk: Our correspondent in al-Biqa' has told us that Israeli aircraft launched four new raids against the command center of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] in 'Ayn al-Bayda in central al-Biqa'. DFLP elements cordoned off the area.

Lebanon: More Israeli Raids; 'Resistance' Fires Katyushas

NC2604072396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0704 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY's [NNA] correspondent in Tulin reports that enemy warplanes staged four air raids on the road leading to al-Sawwanah between 0920 and 0930. The raiding aircraft dropped four rockets, causing huge explosions. At 0935 the Israeli aircraft raided Khirbat Silm. The road between al-Kufur and Hayy al-Bayyad in al-Nabatiyah came under artillery shelling between 0915 and 0930.

Just in from the newsdesk: The NNA correspondent in al-Nabatiyah reports that artillery shelling of Hayy al-Bayyad and the Kufur road has been continuing since 0915 at the rate of one shell a minute. Majdal Silm, Khirbat Silm, and al-Sawwanah are coming under artillery bombardment.

The 'resistance' fired a second salvo of katyusha rockets at northern Palestine five minutes ago.

Lebanon: Israeli Air Force, Navy Continue Shelling Targets in South

TA2604110696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli aircraft and vessels continue attacking south Lebanese targets. Our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that Air Force planes raided a Hizballah base in the Jun area east of Sidon about an hour ago. The pilots reported accurate hits. All our planes returned safely to base.

This morning Israeli planes and helicopters raided Hizballah targets and roads around the villages of al-Siddiqin, Yatar, al-Fil', and Khirbat Silm. One of the targets bombarded was the al-Awwali bridge.

Lebanon: Southerners Urged To Leave Homes, Avoid Hizballah Locations

NC2604071396 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0646 GMT 26 Apr 96

["Communique No. 1 for today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli army is continuing its operations against Hizballah terrorists in the south and elsewhere. Civilians near Hizballah offices, centers, commands, and living quarters should leave these places to avoid endangering themselves. Hizballah is still pursuing its subversive, irresponsible methods by using Lebanese civilians as a shield for its subversive operations.

Citizens of south Lebanon who have not yet left their homes must do so immediately. Travel south is prohibited; anyone who does will be endangering himself.

The Israeli army will continue to bomb any suspicious vehicle. Travel north is allowed.

Lebanon: Israeli Navy Continues Operations Along Lebanese Coast

NC2604071896 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0700 GMT 26 Apr 96

["Communique No. 2 for today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli navy is continuing its operations right along the Lebanese coast, including the area from the al-Awwali bridge to the north and the al-Qasimiyah bridge area north of Tyre. The Israeli navy is continuing its operations to prevent Hizballah terrorists, vehicles, and weapons from going south.

All suspect vehicles will be attacked. Citizens are requested not to travel from Beirut south toward Sidon and Tyre through the al-Awwali and al-Qasimiyah bridges. Anyone travelling south puts his life at risk. Travelling north is permitted.

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Syria: Al-Asad, Christopher Discuss Lebanon Situation 25 Apr

JN2504192496 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 25 Apr 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at 1215 [0915 GMT] today. The meeting took place at the People's Palace.

Christopher was accompanied by Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator of the Middle East peace process; Robert Pelletreau, assistant U.S. secretary of state for Near East and North Africa affairs; and Christopher Ross, U.S. ambassador in Damascus.

The meeting was attended for Syria by Faruq al-Shar', the foreign minister; Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs; 'Adnan 'Imran, assistant foreign minister; and Walid al-Mu'allim and Dr. Mikha'il Wahbah, members of the Syrian delegation to the peace talks.

The conferees discussed the plans proposed by the concerned parties to address the current situation in Lebanon, in light of yesterday's meeting between the U.S. and Lebanese sides. The talks will resume this evening.

Syria: Al-Asad, Christopher Resume Talks 25 Apr

JN2604062496 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher resumed their talks at 2100 [1800 GMT] yesterday. The meeting was attended by Faruq al-Shar', foreign minister; Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs; 'Adnan 'Imran, assistant foreign minister; and Walid al-Mu'allim and Dr. Mikha'il Wahbah, members of the Syrian delegation to the peace talks.

The meeting was attended on the U.S. side by Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator for the peace process; Robert Pelletreau, assistant U.S. secretary of state for Near East and North Africa affairs; and Christopher Ross, U.S. ambassador in Damascus.

The talks addressed the ideas proposed for finding a way out of the current situation in Lebanon. Views were exchanged on these ideas in light of the talks Secretary of State Christopher held with the Lebanese side. The discussions emphasized that a solution must produce a cease-fire, a halt to Israeli hostilities, and the return of displaced persons to their homes. It was agreed that the talks will be resumed today.

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The conferees discussed the plans proposed by the concerned parties to address the current situation in Lebanon, in light of the meeting between the U.S. and Lebanese sides held the day before yesterday [24 April]. Christopher left Damascus at midnight yesterday after a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic.

Syria: Lebanon's Birri, al-Hariri Meet Christopher in Damascus 25 Apr

JN2504201096 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 25 Apr 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] Nabih Birri, speaker of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies, and Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri conferred with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Damascus this evening.

Syria: Burns Cited on 25 Apr Christopher Talks With Lebanese Officials

JN2604072096 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Lebanese Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Lebanese Prime Minister Raifq al-Hariri conferred with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Damascus yesterday evening.

After the meeting, official U.S. State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns made a statement to reporters, saying: Secretary Christopher held fruitful talks with Nabih Birri and Rafiq al-Hariri. The talks addressed the U.S. proposals which will hopefully bring an end to the fighting and bring things back to normal.

Burns hoped that this would help reinforce the 1993 understanding. He added: The discussions on these proposals were good. They tackled all points. Our view is that the Lebanese leadership is serious, and that it is working hard, just like us, Syria, and the Israeli side, to

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achieve an agreement. He pointed out that differences still exist.

Burns went on to say: Secretary Christopher will meet with His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad. Afterward, he will leave for Israel for talks with the Israeli prime minister. We have had a busy day. We held a good number of discussions. There is still work to be done. Burns affirmed that there are still differences. He added: All sides need to continue to work to achieve the aspired goal.

When asked if Christopher will return to Damascus today, Burns said: It is a shuttle mission. In a shuttle mission, nothing can be planned in advance.

When queried about the general atmosphere as he sees it so far, he said: If I were to answer this question, I would be saying more than I should.

Answering a question on whether the discussions addressed the achievement of an interim agreement or an interim cease-fire, Burns said: We are looking forward to a cease-fire and to reaffirming the 1993 understanding. We have been discussing this for the past six days, since Secretary Christopher began his shuttle mission. We are working seriously to achieve this. It is our hope that we will be able to continue our efforts to make progress. But I must say that there is no agreement yet, and that there are still differences that need to be discussed.

When asked whether he is expecting quick results, he said: It is our strong hope that there will be results.

Responding to a question on whether the U.S. proposals include French ideas, Burns said: Secretary Christopher highly values the efforts being made by his colleague and partner mediator Herve de Charette, who worked relentlessly to achieve a cease-fire this week. He expressed the belief that the United States and France have the same goals. They are seeking peace in Lebanon. Nonetheless, I should say that there is a single channel for negotiations; namely, the U.S. channel, Burns noted.

When asked by a French reporter on when a cease-fire could be announced, Burns said that this issue has not been settled yet. We are currently negotiating on this with all sides. We must make greater progress before agreement is reached in this regard.

In reply to another question on whether the Lebanese views regarding the U.S. proposals have been discussed, Burns answered: Yes. They were debated in Lebanon the day before yesterday [24 April], and also in Damascus. We discussed with the Lebanese leaders all the points enshrined in the U.S. paper. He described the discussions as good. He added that there are still some problems that need to be worked out.

Syria: Christopher Returns 26 Apr; Burns, Peres Cited on Tel Aviv Talks

JN2604121196 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher arrived in Damascus at 1200 today on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. The U.S. secretary of state met with Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres in occupied Jerusalem this morning. Nicholas Burns, speaker for the U.S. State Department, said the meeting was extremely good. He said that Christopher will return to Damascus to pursue his efforts, which he began a week ago, to end the fighting in Lebanon.

Burns expected Christopher to return to Jerusalem later today, adding that he cannot fix the exact time of his return. Asked if he expects an agreement to be concluded by the end of the day, Burns said that he does not know. He added: We made some progress yesterday, but there are still some differences and it is clear that we need to work more.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Peres asserted that cease-fire negotiations are in the final stage. He said to reporters: Currently, we are putting the final touches on these negotiations. In another statement, Peres said that an agreement on the situation in Lebanon is likely to be reached in a short while.

Syria: Russia's Posuvalyuk Departs for Beirut 25 Apr

JN2504112696 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1015 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posuvalyuk today left Damascus for Beirut.

Aleksandr Smirnov, press attache at the Russian Embassy in Damascus, said Posuvalyuk will meet in Beirut with Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri within the context of his contacts and meetings with the concerned parties to put an end to the military operations in Lebanon and stop the shelling against innocent civilians.

Smirnov added that Posuvalyuk will return to Damascus this evening.

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Syria: Al-Shar'—High-Level Meetings With Israel Not Allowed Before Pullout

NC2504115096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1030 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunis, 25 Apr (MENA)—Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' emphasized that the continued Israeli military aggressions in Lebanon are a catastrophe for the Arab and world conscience. World conscience, he said, allowed itself to consent to these continuous aggressions carried out by a hostile, expansionist, and conspiratorial state. This against a defenseless nation demanding the return of its land and full rights in southern Lebanon, which has been occupied by Israel for long years.

In an interview with the Tunisian newspaper AL-SHURUQ today, al-Shar' expected the Arabs to adopt new approaches in their future communications and relations with Israel. He also expected them to resort to more radical methods toward Israeli stands in response to Tel Aviv's acts.

Al-Shar' announced that Syria and Lebanon will not sign any peace deal with Peres or others in Israel. Moreover, he announced, Damascus will not allow any Syrian high-level meeting with Israelis, as Tel Aviv leaders themselves are demanding, before a full Israeli pullout from the Golan and South Lebanon.

He emphasized that Syria is not in a hurry; rather it is calling for patience and calm until all rights are restored.

He said any Israeli attempts to pressure Syria and the Arabs into accepting Israel's goals and conspiracies will be futile.

Syria: Defense Minister Remarks on 'Crazy War' Against Lebanon

JN2504184996 Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic 17 Apr 96 p 13

[Report by Yusuf al-Bujayrami in Damascus]

[FBIS Translated Text] General Mustafa Talas, Syrian deputy commander in chief of the Army and the Armed Forces and defense minister, stressed that the Israel's crazy war against Lebanon reflects the aggressive Israeli psyche and proves that this alien entity does not want peace. Rather, he said, it wants to subjugate and humiliate the Arab nation and plunder its resources. He said that Israel's actions against Lebanon are aimed at undermining the peace process and destabilizing the region. Israel does not want to have peace with its neighbors, he remarked.

In a lecture on the effects of international changes in the Arab homeland, Gen. Talas said: Why is the Israeli aggression against Lebanon happening now? Hizballah has been there for 16 years.

He said: If we look back at the last few days before the aggression, we find that Lebanon was living in joy and happiness when Chirac visited and managed to win the hearts of the Lebanese. However, Israel does not want the Lebanese people to be happy. Therefore, days after Chirac's visit, it committed its aggression and started Operation Grapes of Wrath.

Gen. Talas said that Israel's aggression and the emptying of 56 Lebanese villages of their population is aimed at pressuring the Lebanese Government in order to separate the Syrian and Lebanese tracks and to break the will of steadfastness and resistance. He added: If the battle continues, it will not be in Israel's interest.

Talas explained the latest regional and international developments in light of the schemes planned by Washington and Tel Aviv several decades ago. He touched on the situation in each Arab country and each country's stands during the Arab-Israeli conflict and the wars in the region.

He said that the October 1973 war of liberation, which was a partial victory, was an important turning point in the history of the Arab nation. After that war, he said, the colonialist powers intensified their plans to dismember the Arab nation, prevent Arab unity, and preoccupy the Arab nation with marginal wars, such as the first and second Gulf wars. He said: The United States wants Saddam Husayn to remain in power so that he will remain the scarecrow of the Gulf.

On the situation in Iraq and the calls for its partition, Gen. Talas indicated that the United States wants to effect a change in Iran and then dismember Iraq. Concluding his lecture, Gen. Talas emphasized: The willpower to fight will not diminish. We in Syria will hold fast. We will achieve our objectives and a just peace. Otherwise, let the Jews go to hell. Syria will continue to support Lebanon. No force can defeat us if we are united.

General Talas delivered his lecture on Syria's 50th Independence Day, 17 April, at Damascus University.

Syria: Ba'th Party's al-Ahmar Calls For Solidarity With Lebanon

JN2504180196 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and the head of the Pan-Arab Committee for Expatriates, received participants of the Syrian

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Arab-Italian medical conference that was held at Aleppo University recently. Italian and Syrian doctors from the Arab Expatriates Association in Italy attended the conference. [passage omitted]

Comrade al-Ahmar reviewed the recent tragic developments in the region as a result of the brutal and ongoing Israeli aggression against Lebanon. He indicated that this aggression is a new link in a series of hostile Israeli practices that have been continuing for decades in order to ensure Israel's control and domination of the region. He said: Israel has proved that it does not hesitate to commit the ugliest war crimes, state terrorism, and deliberate and systematic genocide. Israel has committed brutal massacres and has deliberately destroyed homes and villages. It has bombarded roads, public installations, and the Lebanese infrastructure in order to achieve its hostile objectives.

Comrade al-Ahmar stressed that, despite the horrible and brutal aggression, Lebanon's national unity has been enhanced. Lebanon's cohesiveness with and inseparableness from Syria and its determination to liberate its land and achieve a just, comprehensive peace in the region have been augmented, he said.

Comrade al-Ahmar indicated that resisting occupation troops is one of the rights and duties of any people whose land is occupied. He said the deliberate confusion between terrorism and resistance is aimed at justifying the occupation and aggression.

He stressed the importance of the role that can be played by friendly popular organizations in their own countries in explaining the reality of what is going on, rallying solidarity with the victims of Israeli aggression, and condemning Israel's war crimes, state terrorism, and genocide. He also stressed the Arab communities' duties and important role in this regard.

He said that all developments prove Israel's aggressiveness and opposition to any honest movement toward peace. He said that efforts must be intensified in order to advance the peace process and achieve the objectives of this process, represented by a just, comprehensive peace that ends occupation and aggression, ensures regional security, and provides the appropriate conditions for progress by the peoples and countries of the region.

Syria: U.S., UN Urged To Deter Israel From Further 'Aggression'

JN2504151196 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1145 GMT 25 Apr 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: We notice that the comprehensive Israeli aggression against Lebanon has entered its 15th day. Hence, the human conscience — not just the Arab conscience — must pause at this aggression, which is a horrifying human tragedy in many ways. First, modern wars, even between equitable armies, are over in a few days. The Israeli side is going to extremes with its huge arsenal of sophisticated weapons of destruction and is using them against unarmed people to destroy life and property in Lebanon. The barbaric Israeli aggression is not only state terrorism by Israel's army, navy, and air force. This aggression also represents war crimes aimed at annihilating human beings. This was exposed through Israel's bombardment of ambulances and the massacres at Qana and al-Nabatiyah in southern Lebanon.

Second, Israel's terrorism and annihilation of human beings becomes increasingly horrible once observers realize that Israel is perpetrating these Nazi crimes in Lebanon during its annual period of mourning for the European Jews who, along with other European peoples, where annihilated by Hitler. In this contradiction lies a tragedy that was noticed by the historian Toynbee 36 years ago. Israel was disturbed by Toynbee's observations and for condemning it when he said: The most horrible thing that burdens the mind is that Israel might subject the Arabs to the same persecution to which Hitler subjected the Jews.

Third, the world, which is following the Israeli terrorist aggression against Lebanon, has noticed that Israel is harboring or, rather, showing a disdain and willingness to challenge the United Nations that equals the amount of hatred it harbors and announces to the Arab people. Israel bombed the UN soldiers' camp in which the women and children of southern Lebanon sought refuge and where the massacre of Qana took place — a massacre that opened the world's eyes to Israel's terrorism. The massacre in Qana is not the first example of Israel's criminal disdain for the United Nations. Indeed, Israel killed Count Bernadotte, the United Nations' martyr and international mediator, in 1948 just because he demanded in his report that the Palestinian refugees be repatriated to their homeland. In addition, Israel broke a 1949 pledge to repatriate Palestinian refugees — a condition on which Israel's membership in the United Nations depended.

Observers saw these tragic elements, the most prominent of which is the Israeli terrorist aggression against Lebanon. They also noticed the magnificent and glorious Lebanese scene — the unity of the people and Government of Lebanon against the Israeli aggression and the steadfastness of Lebanon, the hero that clearly announced its refusal to bargain over its territorial integrity and sovereignty. Lebanon told the entire world from the United Nations' podium that security will not prevail in

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southern Lebanon unless Israel withdraws completely, in accordance with Resolution 425.

In light of Israel's stands, which show disdain for the United Nations and its soldiers' camp in which the children and women of Qana sought refuge, any human being realizes that Israel cannot challenge the entire international community, represented by the United Nations, on its own. Any human being also realizes that a very influential international power, the United States, provides Israel with the opportunity to show disdain for the international community and the United Nations because of its bias toward and absolute support for Israel.

From this premise, the international community believes that it is important to condemn the Israeli aggression in Lebanon, hold Israel responsible for the destruction and annihilation taking place against Lebanon and its people, and force it to shoulder the responsibility of offering fair compensation to Lebanon. No reparations, no matter how fair, will compensate Lebanon for its noble martyrs, the victims of the Israeli state terrorism now in its 15th day.

The Arabs, as well as the international community, believe that in order to deter Israel from practicing its terrorist instincts and expansionist ambitions in Lebanon from time to time, the United States and all influential international forces should devote all their capabilities and international prestige to serving peace. This can be done by pressuring Israel to commit to a full withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the occupied Golan, based on UN resolutions. Only this can achieve peace, remove all the causes of tension, and deter Israel from perpetrating aggression and terrorism.

Syria: Commentary Dubs Israel's Peres 'Killer of Children'

JN2504170596 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1825 GMT 24 Apr 96

[Commentary by Yusuf Maqdisi; from the "Behind the News" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Good evening, gentlemen. Yesterday, Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres said he alone shoulders the responsibility for the Qana massacre. With this announcement, Peres deserves the title of killer of children. This title might help him take a large step toward success in the elections that will be held in Israel late next month.

This killer of children did not forget, while he was admitting his responsibility for the Qana massacre, that he is presenting the world with a document of condemnation that says he is one of the most prominent persons in the present era to deliberately commit war crimes against unarmed civilians. But Peres does not pay any attention to world public opinion or to international law. He derives strength from the Israeli military arsenal and conventional and unconventional weapons. He derives strength from those who constantly announce that they will not allow the arms balance in the region to tilt in favor of any party other than Israel. He also derives strength from the current situation that plagues the Arabs and the international community in terms of fragmentation and the inability to punish those who violate international law and the rules of war and peace whenever their interests and ambitions require it.

Consequently, Peres' confession that he is responsible for the Qana massacre does not represent a brave position, as some might imagine. It is a blatant challenge to all those who condemned this grisly massacre. It also represents a disregard for the UN Charter and the resolutions on punishing all those who jeopardize world security and peace.

At any rate, Peres did not perpetrate only the Qana massacre. This massacre is the ugliest manifestation of what is going on in Lebanon in terms of destruction, killing, the displacement of thousands, the burning of power stations, the destruction of bridges, the cutting off of water supplies, and the chasing of individuals, civilian cars, and ambulances.

Peres had to announce that he, his government, and his state are responsible for the savage destruction and bloody terrorism that he insists on continuing so that he can realize his goals, which are no longer a mystery to anybody — including those who bought his claims before, during, and after Sharm al-Shaykh conference that his use of the military option is the quickest way to salvage the peace process. This will make it appear as if the party that threatens the peace process is not Israel, which has thus far refused to acknowledge the land-for-peace principle and the inadmissibility acquiring the lands of others through the use of force.

If Israel had truly been seeking peace, it would have withdrawn its troops from southern Lebanon unconditionally, in accordance with Security Council Resolution 425, and would have withdrawn its troops from the Golan back to the 4 June 1967 lines, in accordance with Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

Gentlemen, Israel does not want peace. It wants the kind of peace that it thinks is appropriate and that earns it hegemony, as is the case with the separate agreements it concluded in Oslo and Wadi al-'Arabah, away from the foundations of Madrid conference.

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Before it started its latest invasion of southern Lebanon on 11 April, Israel withdrew its negotiating delegation from Maryland. Before that, Peres reneged on his announcement that peace is more important to him than the elections by saying that security is more important to him than peace. All these steps were, in fact, part of a plan to abandon and abort the peace process after the Peres government deadlocked the negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. The deadlock was the result of Israel's insistence on making political, geographical, and economic gains at the expense of others — as if a just and comprehensive peace should meet Israel's requirements alone, even if it is at the expense of land and national dignity.

Gentlemen, the foundations and principles of peace were provided for in Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and at the Madrid conference, which is the real point of reference for all those who want a just and comprehensive peace in the region. The course of the talks that followed the launching of the peace process showed that Israel was responsible for placing obstacles along the road to peace under feeble pretexts that, in the final analysis, are devouring the land and expanding its hegemony on the Arab arena. A case in point is the current efforts to end the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and the Peres government's attempts to reap the fruits of its aggression, code-named Grapes of Wrath, and its threats to continue this bloody and ugly aggression until it achieves its goals.

The current efforts should focus on ending the savage invasion and preventing it from achieving its goals, which Israel will never be able to achieve. Failure to work out a political solution will escalate tension and increase the danger. If the hands of the outlaw remain free to start fires and perpetrate massacres — without being actively deterred — the peace process will be harmed and destroyed and the law of the jungle will reign in the region.

Given all this, it is very important to return to the foundations of the peace process, as stipulated in Madrid conference of 1991, and not to boast of perpetrating bloody massacres, like those in Qana and al-Nabatiyah, aimed at making political and geographic gains to justify the violation of the Madrid foundations.

Syria: Prime Minister Receives Pakistan's Bhutto 25 Apr

JN2504170496 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi received Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto today. The meeting was attended by General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Army and Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister; and Dr. Najah al-'Attar, culture minister. Discussion dealt with bilateral relations and the results of talks between the two countries to reinforce cooperation. After the meeting, a number of agreements and protocol were signed in the presence of al-Zu'bi, Bhutto, and the delegations.

Syria: Pakistan's Bhutto Issues Statement Before Departing

BK2504145696 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto left Damascus for home this afternoon at the end of her two-day visit to Syria. She was seen off at the airport by President Hafiz al-Asad and Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi.

In a statement before departure, the prime minister sounded a note of confidence that ties between Pakistan and Syria will further be strengthened in the days to come. She said her talks with President Hafiz al-Asad and Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi covered a wide range of regional and international issues of mutual interest and concern. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said the two sides specially focussed on the challenges confronting the Islamic world and the Middle East, particularly the recent brutal Israeli aggression against Lebanon, Bosnia-Herzegovina, South Asia, and Afghanistan. She said Pakistan fully supports Syria's position in the Middle East peace process and is convinced that there can be no just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the region unless Israel withdraws from the Arab territories in line with the UN Security Council resolutions. Reiterating Pakistan's condemnation of the recent Israeli aggression against Lebanon, Ms. Benazir Bhutto said Islamabad extended strong support to Lebanon in the Security Council and General Assembly debate on the issue.

The prime minister said Syrian leadership has appreciated Pakistan's viewpoint on Kashmir issue and its true perspective. The Syrian leadership has assured full support for the resolution of the Kashmir dispute under the UN Security Council resolutions. The prime minister expressed gratitude for this assurance which is also in line with the resolution of Kashmir adopted by the seventh Islamic summit in Casablanca. The two sides expressed serious concern at the situation in Bosnia. They urged the UN Security Council to intervene effectively to end the plight of the Bosnian Muslims who, for long, have been at the mercy of ruthless Serbian aggression.

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On bilateral relations, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said they have agreed to make intensive efforts to exploit the potential that exists particularly in the economic and commercial fields to develop bilateral ties. The Pak-Syria Joint Ministerial Commission will be reinvigorated and its next session in Islamabad would draw up an action-oriented program of specific joint ventures to boost trade and economic cooperation. The two countries also look forward to greater cooperation by their private sectors for the realization of this goal. She foresaw greater contacts in the education, information, cultural, and scientific fields between Pakistan and Syria in the coming days. This process will be further strengthened by the agreements reached during her stay in Syria. The prime minister said she was greatly impressed by the progress and prosperity achieved by Syria in recent years, particularly in the economic and social sectors under the able guidance of President Hafiz al-Asad.

Syria: Amendment of Palestinian Charter Criticized

JN2504194296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1550 GMT 25 Apr 96

[From the "Today's Talk" program by Fayiz Qandil; from the Palestine Broadcast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother strugglers: In describing an earthquake, the Egyptian poet Hafiz Ibrahim said: It was over in seconds. An Israeli official described the decision to mutilate the Palestinian National Charter in the self-rule protectorate as the most significant event of the 20th century.

The whole thing is unbelievable, like a nightmare. This so-called Palestinian council is being held during the worst possible circumstances. The lava of death is pouring down on heroic Arab Lebanon, which hosted the Palestinian resistance for many years and which made for Arab Palestine the same sacrifices that were being made by the Palestinian Arab people. This non-Palestinian Palestinian council is being held in the wake of the massacres at Qana and al-Nabatiyah by Shim'on Peres and Israel. The blood of the martyrs from these massacres has merged with the blood of the Palestinian Arab martyrs shed by the barbarous Israeli enemy in the massacres of Dayr Yasin on 9 April 1948—a horrendous bloodbath that was commemorated this month by the Palestinian Arab people.

The tragicomic thing here is that the so-called Palestine National Council took only minutes to adopt what the Israeli official described as the most significant event of the 20th century. Indeed, it was all over in seconds, as Hafiz Ibrahim described the earthquake. Moreover, the resolution was adopted in a comic, jocular, and humorous atmosphere. We will not add to the descriptions of the meeting. The press agency reports on it are sufficient.

In fact, the Palestinian disaster began 79 years ago with what is called the Balfour Declaration. This disaster is now being aggravated by a promise or a pledge to the Israeli occupation from the Oslo agreement group. This pledge was fulfilled last night by the cancellation of the Palestinian Arab people's national, historical, and inalienable rights.

The Balfour declaration gave Arab Palestine to Israel to become a base for British colonialism in the Arab homeland under the guise of establishing the so-called Jewish national home. The Oslo agreement group promised the Israeli colonialists that it will cancel the Palestinian National Charter — that is, cancel the Palestinian people's and Arab nation's right to Arab Palestine.

Thirty-six years ago, President Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir described the Balfour Declaration by saying that Palestine was given by those who did not own it—that is, the British colonialists—to the undeserving—that is, the Israeli colonialists.

The aims of the British colonialists and all the European colonialists who preceded them were very clear. The operation was a colonialist one and had nothing to do with morals or religious creeds, no matter how the Zionists and the Israelis talk about the myth of the promised land and the so-called God's promise. Even Weizman himself—we mean Chaim Weizman and not the present Weizman—who was the first to call himself president of Israel, admitted this in his memoirs. He said that 2,000 years of Jewish prayers did not establish a Jewish state in Palestine, but a piece of paper, the Balfour Declaration, did the trick.

Now, 79 years after that ominous declaration—the Balfour Declaration—was issued, a gathering calling itself the Palestine National Council met in Gaza on 23 April. From among that gathering, some people said that they promised Israel they would annul the Palestinian National Charter. In fact, this means annulling the Palestinian Arab people's right to Arab Palestine. The next day, 24 April, they honored that ominous promise. However, this time, this promise was not by Balfour, but a council falsely attributed to Arab Palestine.

Once again, someone who does not own the land is giving it away to people who have no right to claim it. The Oslo agreement was signed about three years ago not by British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour, but by a delegation representing only the PLO leadership. The Oslo agreement group does not own the land. Arab

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Palestine is owned by the Palestinian Arab people. It is unreasonable for the Palestinian Arab people to cede their national, historic, and inalienable rights.

From a pragmatic and self-interested point of view, or shall we say, from a realistic point of view, as some would prefer — an indecent point of view indeed — those who give self-interest, pragmatism, and realism precedence over rights and principles, should ask: In return for what is the Oslo group abolishing the Palestinian National Charter? Has Israel declared a constitution that states, for example, that its border is what was decided in accordance with the 1949 UN resolution on the partitioning of Palestine? Will Israel, in such a case, return most of the Galilee, including the coastal city of 'Akko, and most of the Palestinian coast, including Yafo, in addition to the small triangle that was usurped by Israel in accordance with the second truce of 1949? The partition resolution provides for returning the Negev area to the Palestinian Arab people. Negev is half the size of Israel. The Dimona nuclear reactor, Beersheba, and Umm al-Rashrash, or the Palestinian port of al-'Aqabah, which is called Elat by Israel, are there. In addition, the partition resolution bans any Israeli Government, official, military, paramilitary, or police presence in Jerusalem within what constituted the Jerusalem municipality border until the night the partition resolution was issued on 29 November 1947.

Has Israel announced its recognition of the partition resolution? Has it declared its readiness to implement the Lausanne agreement of 1949, which provides for the repatriation of the now 4 million Palestinian refugees to their ancestral land, including the Palestinian land that they call Israel? Has Israel offered any of this so that the Oslo group could offer to abolish the Palestinian National Charter? What is going on in Gaza now is not a sleazy concession, but a squandering of national and pan-Arab rights. The wise men of the Gaza council must be aware of the Islamic ruling in this case. They must be aware of it, because they once talked about the Islamic penalty for those who sow corruption on earth. By that penalty, they did not mean Israel. Rather, alas, they meant the righteous heroes who sacrificed their lives for the sake of Palestine and its heroic Arab people.

To those who are mutilating the charter, we relate this story: An Arab official once wanted to placate Moshe Dayan, the former Israeli army minister, by telling him: If Israel will only soften its position a little and offer some slight concession. With a sarcastic smile of contempt on his face, extending even to his pirate's eye patch, Dayan replied: This is not a social occasion to exchange gifts.

We tell this terrible joke to the limited self-rule group and its many councils. We tell it to those who have promised to give the undeserving—that is, the Zionist terrorist invaders—what they do not own: namely, the cancellation of the Palestinian National Charter.

We would like to reiterate that those who have the right to make a final decision on this matter are the Palestinian Arab people, who can see that the so-called Palestine National Council is not being convened on free Palestinian soil but on a land that Israel has ruled and savagely besieged since 25 February and that it has closed for long periods of times. We cannot forget the Israeli siege that was imposed following the deportation of the 420 Palestinian strugglers to Marj al-Zuhur in Lebanon three years ago.

The Palestinian Arab people can see that Israel prevents the self-rule authority officials from traveling around the occupied Palestinian territory. Israel has even detained them in its surveillance centers for many hours, despite the fact that it was negotiating with them in Madrid, Washington, and Oslo. The Palestinian Arab people can see that the self-rule authority is a captive in an Israeli cell. Therefore, the cancellation of the charter by the Oslo group is nonbinding on the Palestinian Arab people, because those who decided the cancellation are, in effect, captives of Israel. A captive cannot have an authority over the Palestinian Arab people, who are the sole legitimate owners of the Palestinian land and the sole legitimate owner, along with the Arab nation, of the Palestinian National Charter, with the historical, national, and inalienable rights it contains.

As for the Israeli official's remark that the cancellation is the most significant event in the 20th century, we say that this is true on paper only because this cancellation will never penetrate the Palestinian Arab conscience and the comprehensive Arab conscience, which is in harmony with the charter: that is, the right of the Palestinian Arab people to their homeland.

What took place in Gaza last night is an insult to the Palestinian Arab people, who can only repeat what the ancient Arab poet said: The cruel may curse me, but I pass by him because this is of no concern to me.

This farce, and the farces that it will engender, is of no concern to the Palestinian Arab people, because with their struggle, these people will preserve their national charter and protect it from tampering. They will give it as a trust to the successive Arab generations in order to hold it up as a beacon and struggle in accordance with its national, historic, and inalienable principles.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Tank, Artillery Battle in Nangarhar Kills 10

LD2504140596 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A Radio Message of Freedom correspondent reports from the city of Jalalabad that during clashes between the Momand and Dawlatzay tribes in Chaparhar [in Rodat district, Nangarhar Province] 10 people were killed and a number of others were injured.

[Words indistinct] the report says that in 1358 [21 March 1979] following the Russian invasion, Shaykh Mullakhel, a Hezb-e Eslami commander, with backing from Malek Jandad, an elder from the Dawlatzay tribe, killed two members of the Momand tribe [words indistinct]. Later Gholam Mohayddin's family [of the Momand tribe; he was a member of parliament in the early 60s] established relations with commander Barat Khan and obtained a large quantity of weapons from him to fight the Malek Jandad family.

Eventually last Monday [22 April] they waylaid Malek Jandad and killed him. When the report of Malek Jandad's death reached commander Barat Khan, commanding the artillery unit in the 4th Brigade in Nangarhar, he immediately brought tanks and heavy weapons to Dawlatzay village. After 24 hours of fighting between him and Malek Jandad's family, he entered his house and killed 10 men of that family on the spot.

It is said that a number of children were also killed or injured during the battle. The report adds that Dawlatzay tribe gunmen [words indistinct] where they believe their enemies have sought refuge.

Afghanistan: Explosion Occurs at Taleban Ammunition Depot in Lowgar

LD2504165296 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] An explosion has occurred at a Taleban ammunition depot in Barakibarak in Lowgar Province. Reports reaching BAKHTAR say that a guard at the depot, where different kinds of ammunition were stored, was killed and a number of others injured. The cause of the explosion is thus far unknown. Similar explosions have occurred in the past in Taleban's ammunition depots in Lowgar, Maydan, Ghazni, Kandahar, and Paktia Provinces.

Afghanistan: Government Forces Kill 13 Taleban South of Kabul

LD2504165796 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Thirteen Taleban elements, including a commander, were recently killed in the south of Kabul Province. BAKHTAR reports that Mullah Sur Gol and five of his men were killed in Rish Khvor and the Soltan pass by heavy weapons fire from Islamic Army forces. One of their tanks, with its ammunition, was destroyed and its eight-member crew were killed.

According to another report a Taleban commander, Mullah Seyfollah was attacked and killed in Ghazni city. The commander, who was notorious for his cruelty, was attacked by unidentified men and was killed, along with his four bodyguards. In retaliation the Taleban arrested 50 shopkeepers in Ghazni city, accusing them of being supporters of Qari Baba [former governor of Ghazni Province] and [words indistinct].

Another reports says that the Taleban martyred a woman while she was buying food for her family.

Afghanistan: Taleban Rockets Target Kabul 25 Apr

LD2504191296 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Taleban fired 10 rockets into Kabul this evening. BAKHTAR reported that the hireling Taleban group fired more than ten BM40 rockets and mortar shells into residential areas of Kabul city this evening. No report has been received about loss of life or material damage.

Another report says that this morning Benazir Bhutto's Taleban fired rockets into residential areas. As a result two houses were destroyed.

Afghanistan: Taleban Forces Shell Kabul

LD2604103096 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] With the escalation of clashes in Afghanistan between government forces and the Taleban group, 37 people were killed or injured. The reports received from Kabul indicate that following the landing of at least 10 Katyusha rockets and heavy-artillery shells on Kabul, 24 civilians were killed or injured.

BAKHTAR, the Afghan official news agency, last night announced that a Teleban commander and four of his security guards were killed during an attack by an unidentified group in Ghanzi Province. Another

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13 Taleban forces were also killed during shelling by government forces. [passage omitted]

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Rahman—Government Power 'Absolute and Unquestionable'

BK2604040596 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1600 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The chief adviser, Mohammad Habibur Rahman, has directed field-level officials to discharge their duties with honesty and dedication in curbing terrorism to conduct the forthcoming parliamentary election in a free, fair and neutral manner.

The directive came when he was addressing the deputy commissioners and superintendents of police from all over the country at the International Conference Center in Dhaka this morning. He said the congenial and peaceful atmosphere is a prerequisite to ensure peaceful holding of the poll.

The chief adviser categorically said the executive power of the present nonparty caretaker government is absolute and unquestionable. The government has full power on the entire government machinery and will provide all assistance to the Election Commission to conduct the coming elections peacefully and impartially. He asked the officials to take immediate action against law breakers.

Referring to the recent changes in the administration, he said this has been done to ensure the neutrality of the caretaker government. Mr. Rahman said the society must be freed from terrorism and evil designs of the antisocials. Referring to terrorism, toll collection [forcible collection of money from people], hijacking of ballot boxes, and rigging, the chief adviser said his government is to consolidate power to deal with these elements. He clearly advised the concerned officials to recover illegal arms from the country. Mr. Rahman also urged all political parties to cooperate with the government in this regard.

Bangladesh: Cease-Fire in Chittagong Hill Tracts Extended

BK2504160396 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1500 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The government and the Chittagong Hill Tracts People's Solidarity Council have agreed to extend the cease-fire until 30 June. The time limit for the present cease-fire expires on 30 April.

India

India: Islamabad Reports Plan for 'Mass Murders' in Kashmir

BK2504140396 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In occupied Kashmir, the spokesman of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, Professor Abdul Ghani Butt, has disclosed that the Indian intelligence agencies have chalked out a plan of mass murders and large-scale destruction in a bid to avoid severe reaction of the people during the sham elections that the Indian authorities are bent upon holding despite people's resistance. PTV special correspondent Ghulam Nabi Khayal reports from New Delhi.

[Begin recording] With the elections to the Indian parliament being completed next month, there has been a spurt in the fighters activities in Kashmir. With their intensified attacks on patrolling soldiers and their pickets, the death toll across the Kashmir valley has reached an all-time high of 25 to 30 people per day. The figures have been confirmed by the official sources. The sources disclosed that as many as 1,700 people were killed in acts of militancy during the first three months of the current year. During the last 24 hours, 14 people, including 11 fighters, were shot dead at different places in Kashmir.

The police claimed to have also arrested 21 youths on suspicion. In the border town of Uri, seven residential houses were completely burned in a mysterious fire. The local residents have blamed the forces for torching of these houses. Meanwhile, the leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Atal Behari Vajpayee, has cautioned that in case of the Congress party coming to power again the unity of India shall be endangered. Addressing a press conference in the Foreign Correspondents' Club here today, Vajpayee reiterated that his party shall go for manufacturing of a nuclear bomb and increase the defense expenditure considerably. Ghulam Nabi Khayal, PTV News, New Delhi. [end recording]

India: 4 Killed, 19 Injured in Bomb Blast in Imphal

BK2504153096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Manipur, four persons were killed and 19 others injured in a bomb explosion near the Indian Airlines office in Imphal this afternoon. Police said the injured have been admitted to various hospitals. The chief minister, Mr. Rishang Keishing, and Union Minister of State for Home Professor M. Kamson have strongly condemned the incident. The chief minister has

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announced an ex gratia payment of 20,000 rupees each to the family members of those killed and 5,000 rupees to those seriously injured.

India: Delhi Court Extends Ban on Import of Toxic Waste

BK2604033796 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Delhi High Court has extended the ban on import of toxic waste into the country. Mr. Justice C.M. Nair has also ordered the center to reply within four weeks on the application by the worldwide fund which sought the ban to protect environment. The next hearing is slated for the 12th of July.

India: U.S. Official's Afghan Visit Shows Renewed U.S. Interest

BK2604093296 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 25 Apr 96 p 13

[Editorial: "Raphel's Kabul Move"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Every time Ms Robin Raphel, US Assistant Secretary of State in charge of South Asia, visits the subcontinent she triggers speculations if not hostile comments. Her recent visit to Pakistan and Afghanistan did neither. For, the objectives were pretty clear, and unexceptionable. She herself revealed in Kabul that there is "growing (US) interest" in Afghanistan. Her careful selection of words was meant to conceal a reality—which many Pakistanis resent—that after Soviet withdrawal Washington has left the Afghan Islamist civil war largely to Pakistan to handle. Ms Raphel wants Pakistan not to think that the US has abandoned all its commitment to stabilise the politics of war ravaged Afghanistan. The US probably hoped that by encouraging Pakistan to raise and train the Taleban Islamic militia, the present regime in Kabul could be toppled and replaced by a puppet government. Its calculations were upset because the Sunni Taleban so alarmed Teheran by capturing Herat and other western Afghan territory that Iran felt compelled to work on the Rabbani government to spread its influence in Afghanistan. Since last autumn, Iran is acknowledged to have worked up a fair measure of clout in Kabul, and this has probably been a major factor to bring Ms Raphel to Pakistan.

Ms Raphel's trip to Moscow from Kabul suggests that the US recognises there can be no stability in Afghanistan under any scheme that does not have Russian support. Pakistan is in no happy position to act now as a moderating influence between the US and Iran because of Teheran's alleged help to the Hezbollah forces in Lebanon and Islamabad's outwardly pro-Arab policy. Russia perhaps can use its good offices to rein in Iran not only in West Asia but also in Afghanistan. For such hopes to materialise, Mr Yeltsin must win his presidential re-election in June. In the developing scenario in Afghanistan, the Rabbani government seems more securely placed than before. This may cause Pakistan a setback, because a frustrated Taleban militia could mean a worse headache for Islamabad than Hekmatyar's forces were.

India: Article Claims 'Nuclear Ambiguity' Will End With Elections

BK2604091796 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 25 Apr 96 p 11

[Article by Shubha Singh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] THE G7 sumiteers who met recently in Russia have called for a ban on all nuclear testing by autumn this year. The group of seven states and Russia agreed to conclude a treaty supporting a total ban on all nuclear tests by the end of September. This became possible after Moscow dropped its insistence on keeping small tests conducted in laboratories for research purposes outside the scope of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

At a Press conference after the summit, US President Bill Clinton made it clear that the two countries still holding out against a nuclear test ban treaty were China and India. The statement was sufficient indication that these two countries would face the maximum pressure to fall into line on a comprehensive test ban, according to the now formally-stated international agenda for nuclear non-proliferation.

China's objection is to the so called Zero Option. It wants to continue small nuclear tests for peaceful purposes. India on the other hand insists, as an original votary of the nuclear test ban, that the test ban should be a step in the ultimate goal of global nuclear disarmament and as such the proposed CTBT should specify a time frame for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The Indian position bothers the nuclear powers a great deal more than China's demand for low yield nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. In the coming days, New Delhi will face the full force of displeasure of the nuclear powers for throwing a spanner in the works by continuing to harp on the theme of global nuclear disarmament, which has disturbed the apple cart of the western nuclear agenda.

The lull in joint demarches subtle arm-twisting and other cruder forms of getting recalcitrant nuclear states to

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move into step in the nuclear tango, will last only till a new government is in place in New Delhi.

The Conference on Disarmament (COD) being held in Geneva is currently in recess, after its month-long deliberations could barely move a few brackets around on the rolling text of the draft test ban treaty. (Brackets enclose the points over which there is no consensus.) Now that the G-7 have agreed on a time frame for concluding the comprehensive test ban, which so conveniently follows the schedule President Clinton has in mind for the treaty, every effort will be made to wind up the Conference discussions by June. And, one of the major decisions faced by whichever government comes to power in New Delhi will be on the nuclear issue.

The proposed treaty, in its final shape, is unlikely to meet with New Delhi's approval. The new government will have to decide whether it is willing to sign the test ban treaty or not and whether it can face the tremendous pressure over its holding out against the treaty.

President Clinton did not mention the one other country that is also out of step on the nuclear non-proliferation issue — Pakistan. Islamabad's stated position is that it would sign the test ban treaty if India does so. Islamabad has taken the same stance on signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). However, US Assistant Secretary of State Robin Raphel, in her recent visit to Islamabad, spelt out what Washington wants of the test ban.

Various other American officials have stressed the importance of Islamabad adopting an "independent" position on the test ban and not linking it to India's stand on the subject. Islamabad has effectively used this to not sign the NPT, but the pressure over the test ban is likely to be of a much higher order on both countries this time.

Ms Raphel drew attention to the Hank Brown Amendment, the expected delivery of arms and a current move by the Clinton Administration to refund a part of the money paid to Washington towards purchase of military hardware that had not been manufactured. The US official spoke in frank terms on Pakistan evolving a position on issues such as nuclear non-proliferation, missile control and the proposed test ban treaty.

In recent years, the Bhutto government has raised the intensity of public opinion on the nuclear issue to a level that making any perceived changes in the country's nuclear policy without a similar change in the Indian position is a very difficult decision to justify in Pakistan. Hence, Pakistan may well be able to ward off the pressure by deflecting it towards India. This would make it even more necessary for the western nuclear powers to try and get India to make the move to sign the treaty.

Much will depend on the kind of government that is formed when the 11th Lok Sabha is constituted next month. Nuclear ambiguity may not remain an option for too long and the new government will have to take decision on which way to end the ambiguity — by declaring itself a nuclear weapon state or giving up the option.

Iran

Iran: 'Text' of Khamene'i Message to Pilgrims

LD2504173996 Tehran IRNA in English 1241 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 25, IRNA — As a system that has affirmed the life, dynamism and power of Islam in administering human societies despite the anti-Islamic propaganda and efforts of the last hundred years, the Islamic Republic views hajj not as a means to further its own goals, but as a forum for the awakening of Muslims and revivification of the spirit of godwardness and faith in the implementation of the Islamic shari'ah as well as the honour and independence of the world's Muslims, the leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i has said in a message to the hajj pilgrims. The full text of the leader's message is as follows:

And praise be to Allah, the lord of all the worlds, and salutations upon the sayyid of the first and the last, Muhammad al- Mustafa and his blessed household, and upon Baghiyatollah fi'l-Arzin.

Hajj (pilgrimage), this ever-flowing fountain of piety and spirituality, goodness and blessing shall, each year and for ever, supply the Islamic world, and each and every fortunate Muslim, with its abundant favours, and all individuals or congregations may draw benefits from it in proportion to their capacities and capabilities.

The pilgrims to the Bayt Allah al-Haram, are not the only ones who imbibe at this bountiful fountain: if this great obligation is truly recognized and properly carried out, then all Muslim nations and individual Muslim throughout the world will be overflowed by its blessings.

Harm has always come to individuals and communities from two quarters: firstly from within themselves, that is, through human weaknesses, unbridled desires, irresolution and lack of faith and other destructive traits, and secondly from without, namely by enemies who, because of their rebelliousness, paranoiac wishes, aggressiveness and devouring nature, oppress mankind and make their lives unbearable and miserable by forcing war, injustice and suppression upon them.

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And the Islamic world, both as individuals and nations, have always been exposed to the two kinds of threats, and today they are being threatened more than ever before: deliberate propagation of corruption in Islamic countries and imposition of the western culture on them, to the spreading of which certain dependent regime also contribute that affects not only individual behaviours, but also influences many aspects of life from city architecture to general living conditions to radio, television, the print media on the one hand, and military political and economic pressures on some Muslim nations coupled with human slaughterings as in Lebanon, Palestine, Bosnia, Kashmir, Chechnya and Afghanistan on the other, are glaring examples of the two kinds of threats directed against the Islamic communites.

The pilgrimage is like an ever-flowing river, divinely granted, at the banks of which Muslims may always wash from their faces the dusts of hardship and suffering, pollution and malaise, and to refresh themselves by this eternal provision in order ot confront and overcome the two vulnerabilities at all times.

In the performance of hajj the elements of piety, remembrance, presence, submission and absorption in God almighty, shall serve to remove the first threat, and the elements of togetherness, unity and feeling the enormity and the strength of the great, Islamic ummah, of which hajj is the crowning symbol, will tackle the second threat.

The immunity and resistance of individual Muslims and Muslim antions shall increase as these two aspects of hajj are strengthened, but if one or both become weak or extinct, then the Islamic umma, as individuals, nations or states, shall become more vulnerable.

In the texts of the holy shari'ah of Islam and in the Holy Quran, sufficient emphasis is laid upon both these aspects of hajj, and there shall be no doubt whatsoever about them for those with seeing eyes and unbiased hearts: along with the command "celebrate the praises of Allah, as you used to celebrate the praises of your fathers, yea, with far more heart and soul" (s.2.,v.200), there is the order "and an announcement from Allah and his messenger to the people assembled on the day of the great pilgrimage, that Allah and his messenger absolve themselves from the polytheists and pagans" (s.9,v.3), and together with the divine wisdom" it is not their meat, nor their blood, that reaches Allah: it is your piety that reaches him, he has thus made them subject to you that you may glorify Allah for his guidance to you, and proclaim the good news to all who do good" (s.22,v.37), we are also made hopefull" that they may witness the benefits provided for them (s.22,v.28).

Any recommendation, propagation or endeavour in the direction of weakening or abandoning these two aspects of the pilgrimage, will undoubtedly be a confrontation with the verses and injunctions of the Holy Quran.

There is no heavier loss to the Islamic ummah than allowing the teachings and the guidance of Islam, which are vital, eternal, invaluable provisions for Muslims and the whole humanity, to fall into oblivion through the negligence or ignorance of their religious, political leaders, and to deprive people from their benefits.

Hajj is an ever-lastingly valuable reserve of that kind, and it is obligatory upon all Muslims to get to know it better and to exploit it more deeply for the good of the Islamic ummah.

Today the Islamic world is faced with certain extremely threatening problems, and if Muslims do not strive to remove them through the power of faith, struggling, reliance on God, sublime selflessness and with open eyes to utilize the reserved potentials deposited by the almighty in this straight-forward religion, then their arrogant enemies, who are equipped with political and military power and technology, will tighten their encirclement of them and further postpone the days of freedom and salvation in the Islamic countries, not only for decades but for centuries, in the course of which certain nations might by annihilated or they may lose their Islamic identities by the imposition of the corrupting components of the west's culture.

Today, after the establishment of the Islamic Republic in Iran, and Islamic reawakening in many Islamic countries, numerous facts of bitter or sweet nature are known and great numbers of people in the Islamic world are able to properly analyze events around them and to understand the realities of their situations. Yet it must be admitted that the bewitching influence of radios, televisions and the print media, often run by Zionists, their western allies, and certain seemingly Muslim elements who behave as servants of the arrogant powers, are perpetually engaged in distorting the truth. It may, therefore, be propitious here to give a brief summary of the problems facing the Islamic world as well as of the potentials and possibilities at the service of world Muslims.

As far as potentials are concerned, we must, first of all, make mention of the numerical strength of over one billion Muslim throughout the world that embraces some fifty countries and extends from the Pacific Ocean unto the Atlantic Ocean. This great ummah includes nations well-known for their talents and intelligence, some civilizations that go back a few thousand years, and great individuals in the fields of science and politics. This great part of the world's population, better known

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as the Islamic ummah, possesses a very rich culture and an ever-lasting heritage that brilliantly shines in history, and it does enjoy, despite its great variety, an amazing unity instilled in all its component parts and particles. These single-hearted, brother nations, formed of different, racial designations, black, white and yellow, who speak dozens of tongues, believe in being parts of the same great, Islamic ummah in which they take pride, and daily they pray to God in one language and receive their instructions and inspirations from the same divine book that explains all the truths and contains the orders for all their needs and obligations "and we have sent down to you the book explaining everything, a guide, a mercy and glad tidings to Muslims (s.16,v.89).

The geographical location of this great ummah is perhaps the richest region of the world in natural resources, with the single commodity of oil being the support and sustenance of today's industrial civilization: and if the ummah were to stop, for only a few months, the flow of oil to its customers, the larger part of the world, especially these countries whose governments have for centuries made the Islamic nations the victims of their greed and arrogance, shall face a dark, cold and helpless prospect.

A complete list of all the potentials of the Islamic ummah would embrace hundreds of other oustanding topics in fields ranging from culture, politics, economic to social, material and historical contribution that any researcher with some insight will be able to discover.

Now we turn to the big problems that this great part of humanity, the Islamic ummah, is today facing: problems that have made it high impossible for such a great, rich and gifted portion of mankind to exploit its exceptional, practical potentials, which has left the Islamic countries behind the marching caravan of scientific advancement, deprived them of their own abundant, material wealth, subjugated them to foreign cultures, subjected them to others on the international, political scene, and militarily exposed them to aggressions and aggressive policies of arrogant powers.

These problems, that are mainly caused by negligence, mismanangement or treasonous behaviour of elements within the Islamic ummah, would form a long list: they could, however, be briefly categorized under the following headings:

-sectarian conflicts, mainly publicized and intensified by evil ulama and paid writers.

-ethnic and national conflicts, emanating from chauvinistic tendencies, the fires of which are often fanned by dependent, subservient intllectuals.

-submissiveness towards interventionist powers, turning certain governments into satellite states of the big powers.

-surrendering to the corrupt culture of the west and even helping to spread it form their own political and doctrinaire purposes.

-the indifference of certain governments to their own people or their disregard of people's needs, beliefs and aspirations, and taking up despotic stands against them.

-a dread of the arrogant powers, particularly of the United States, on the part of some political, cultural leaders in the Islamic world.

-the presence of the usurper, Zionist regime in the heart of an Islamic region, that is the root cause of many other difficulties.

-promoting secularism and introducing Islam as an abstract experience for individuals that has nothing to do with questions relating to people's lives such as government, politics, economic management, etc.

These and scores of other problems equally grave, though with historical roots mostly, were solvable if the religious and political leaders had shown any sincerity, determination and independence. They are the source of the present predicament of the Islamic world, bringing in their wake poverty, backwardness, ignorance, superstition, prejudice, discrimination, political servility, war and destruction.

The point is that if hajj were held rightly and as commanded by God, it is capable of remedying all the major maladies and causes of failure, though not all of a sudden but gradually in the course of several long years. This gathering of millions of brothers and sisters from all over the Islamic world at a single place, and that too at the scene of observance of spiritual rites performed in unison under the majestic banner of tawhid [monotheism], with refreshed memories of the early years of Islam, of the battles of Badr and Uhud, and the pilgrims presence in the (prophet's) mosque within whose walls still reverberate the animating revelations of the Quran as pronounced by the messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, and the resounding cries of "Allahu akbar" of the first warriors of Islam, in an atmosphere charged with zikr, supplication, and the sense of presence before God, the almighty and the glorious, which liberates human beings from their feeble, self-seeking, and crooked-mined self and unites them with the source of divine majesty, greatness and power - this is healing spring that lends strength to the hearts, edifies the will and steadies the resolve, infusing confidence

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into the souls, broadening the visions, bringing the aspirations closer, uniting the brothers, and disappointing the devil and defeating his guile.

Yes, a true and perfect hajj, a hajj worthy of tawhid, a hajj that is the mainspring of the love of God and the faithful, of the rejection of satans, idols and idolaters, such as hajj would first curb growth of all problems of the Islamic ummah and then resolve them, to become a source of honour for Islam and vigour for Muslims and of the independence of Islamic countries and their freedom from the evil of the aliens.

It was on the basis of such a correct view of the significance of hajj that after the triumph of the great Islamic revolution of Iran the issue of hajj came to have top priority in the international agenda of the government of the Islamic Republic.

Thus this noble regime combined the religio-political aspect of this rite, a manifestation of the divine majesty and power, with its devotional aspect, a manifestation of divine mercy and compassion, bringing the contemporary hajj closer to the hajj of early Islam. It revived the ceremony of disavowal of the polytheists (bara'ah min al-mushrikin) in hajj as a symbol of this and it has pursued the observance of this Islamic duty despite all the political harassment and obstructionist moves inspired by un-Islamic motives.

As a system that has affirmed the life, dynamism and power of Islam in administering human societies despite the anti-Islamic propaganda and efforts of the last hundred years, the Islamic Republic view hajj not as a means to further its own goals, but as a forum for the awakening of Muslims and revivification of the spirit of godwardness and faith in the implementation of the Islamic shari'ah as well as the honour and independence of the world's Muslims.

Those who negate and reject the dynamic and comprehensive character of hajj are in fact against the honour and independence of Muslims and their deliverance from the bloody claws of imperialism and Zionism. Any such kind of fatwa or religious decree is tantamount to giving a ruling in violation of God's revelations, and it derives most probably from ignorance of the realities of the world and its environs and a lack of adequate insight into the affairs of Muslims.

Today everyone who knows the plight of Muslim nations under the tyrannical domination of the united states, whoever is aware of the crimes of the zionists and their covert conspiracies against Muslim countries, whoever senses the danger of the growth of this malignant, cancerous tumour within the political and economic body of the regional states, whoever observes the gloomy conditions of the homeless palestinians who suffer in refugee camps, seeing their country and homeland under the occupation of their oppressors, whoever is aware of the condition of south Lebanon, of its territories under Zionist occupation and its parts under perpetual threat of aggression, whoever has heard about the recent catasrophic events in Lebanon, where the Zionists, now for the twelfth day and with the support of the US Government, have been bombarding more than half of that country from air, land and sea, massacring children and women and ordinary civilians, whoever is aware of Bosnia, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Tajikistan, and Chechnya, whoever knows about the successive hostile measures of the roguish U.S. regime and the anti-human Zionists against the Islamic Republic which today is the manifestation of the sovereignty of the Quran and Islam ... yes, anyone who knows these facts and possesses a sense of Islamic honour and religious duty, will not doubt that to forego such a great opportunity as the hajj and waste such a powerful God- given source of support to Islam and Muslims is to incur a irremediable loss and commit an unforgivable sin.

The present weakness of Muslim states and the sorry disunity of the Islamic countries cannot be concealed or denied. Today the Arab world by its own deeds placed itself in such a condition that, regrettably, it is unable to defend the lebanese poeple who are victims of the crimes of the usurper Zionist regime, and face, even for a single day, an enemy that has usurped its territories. While stockpiles of fighter planes and air defense equipment bought at stupendous cost from western factories exist today in these countries, the aircraft of the bloodthirsty Zionists freely destroy the homes of Arab people and none of these governments is able to stop it. These bitter facts, along with the increased political influence of imperialist powers within many of these countries, as well as the unchecked offensive aimed at achieving a complete cultural invasion of these countries and many other regrettable and alarming events, are sufficient to make every sane mind and wakeful conscience realize that Islamic countries and nations, whose representative sample is now present around the holy Kaabah and at other sacred premises of this land of revelation, stand, more than ever before, in greater need of the spirit and spirituality of hajj and its abundant resources, which it is essential for them to utilize. This is our viewpoint and thesis concerning hajj and the other delivering sacraments of Islam.

It is for this very straightforward and bold stance in the defense of Islam and Islamic laws that the Islamic republic, from the very beginning, has been the target

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of the wrath and resentment of the imperlialist powers with the U.S., the big satan, at their head.

They accuse the Islamic Republic of exporting insecurity and of pursuing expansionist policies so as to justify their malice and hostility in the eyes of the world's people and Muslim public opinion. Their mercenary radios and media funded by the Zionists or by American and Zionist stooges and propagated from the Islamic countries against the Islamic Republic, incessantly broadcast accusations, rumours, commentaries and biased and false reports against the Islamic Republic, meant to curtail the spiritual influence of the Islamic revolution and to damage the sanctity and popularity of the name of our late imam, may Allah sanctify his soul. With the help of the most up-to-date propaganda techniques they try in an unmanly manner to cast disrepute on the Islamic Republic and to turn away its supporters in the Islamic world. With their lies and slander, they are trying to raise a wall between triumphant Islamic Iran and other Islamic countries, where they are afraid of the repetition of the Iranian experience. The most infamous of the world's terrorists, that is, the leaders of the usurper Zionist regime and their perverse patrons in the U.S. Government accuse Islamic Iran of terrorism. At the slightest pretext, the U.S. and Israeli leaders are quick to raise their accusing finger at the Islamic Republic and to mention in their political statements, after every few words, the sacred, majestic and radiant name of Islamic Iran with resentment and rage.

It is a matter of pride for us that the world's infamous scoundrels and perverts should hate us. We too regard their ugly character and polluted hands with disgust and resentment. The God and his messenger too hate and dislike them:

Verily, God and his messenger resent the idolaters. (9:2).

Today, with God's grace and despite the hostility and obstructionism of the malevolent, the Islamic Republic marches onwards with power, honour and a steady resolve and determination, as a stable country with an accelerating pace of construction and development, with an administration that is popular and close to the masses, with a deserved presence and repute in the world, with a zealous faith in Islam, with its live and dynamic youth free from the grievous problems of the youth in many other countries, with a people intelligent, brave and ready to defend Islam and Iran, with an expansive spirituality side by side with growth and development, and, ultimately, with an exemplary and rare solidarity among the citizens.

Thank God, the massive propaganda of the enemy serves us as the indicator of our increasing power and the greatness of our people and country.

At the end, I call upon all the dear pilgrims to make the fullest use of the opportunity provided by these great days and I invite all of them to contemplate upon hajj and to draw a spiritual provision fo the rest of their lives. I ask the revered clergymen to raise these issues in an appropriate manner in the gatherings of Iranian and non-Iranian caravans and bring the spirituality of hajj and its political message to the hearts and souls of the pilgrims.

I beseech God, the exalted, to grant honour to Islam and Muslims and give real independence to Islamic countries, liberating them from the political and economic domination of the imperialists. I beseech the one lord, to preserve the majesty and glory of Islamic Iran under the shelter of the special favour and attention of the Hazrat Baqiyatollah (the imam of the age), may our souls be his ransom.

Peace by upon all our faithful brethren.

Iran: Velayati Interviewed on Visit to Lebanon, Need for Support

NC2604061096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Republic's political efforts to end the Zionist regime's aggression against south Lebanon continue. Foreign Minister Velayati talked with Lebanese officials in Beirut yesterday. The foreign minister described these talks as constructive and said the objective behind his visit to Lebanon was to express the Islamic Republic's full support for the Lebanese Government and people.

Velayati added that the important message from the esteemed leader to the Lebanese Government and nation was constructive and strong, showing how much the esteemed leader of the Islamic Revolution favors the Lebanese nation and people.

The foreign minister also spoke about current efforts to end the Zionist regime's raids on Lebanon and told our correspondent:

[Begin Velayati recording] In relation with the current talks involving the interested parties, what we expect is support—irrespective of whose support it is—for a plan that combines various options. It may be different in appearance from the Tir 1372 [month ending 22 July 1993] plan but is the same in essence and content. We hope the Zionist regime's aggression will end as

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soon as possible with pressure from the international public, resistance by the Lebanese people, and support by the Islamic and Arab world for Lebanon and that the understanding of Tir 1372 will be revived. [end recording]

Iran: Daily on Nuclear Summit, Yeltsin's Stand

LD2504152696 Tehran KAYAN INTERNATIONAL in English 22 Apr 96 p 2

[Daily editorial: "Yeltsin Says Nay to Clinton Again"]

[FBIS Translated Text] None in the present world entertains any doubts on the potentially catastrophic dangers of nuclear weaponry and energy going awry. So the outcome of the Kremlin summit where the G-7 countries: Japan, France, Italy, Germany, Canada, the United States and Britain, as well as Russia and Ukraine agreed on signing a general declaration on improving nuclear security and combating nuclear smuggling, should be evaluated positively.

The summit participants also pledged to see to it that a comprehensive treaty — banning all nuclear explosions, tests or otherwise — is signed by September.

An important issue that was raised by the president of the host country, Boris Yeltsin, was China's opposition to a test ban. However, there was not even a hint for Yeltsin and his guests on the nuclear weapons potentialities of the Zionist regime.

As long as some states which make no secret of their nuclear power capabilities, and countries like Israel which take pride in being clandestine members of the nuclear club, are left unharnessed, any test-ban accord, which will be signed in the fall, cannot be proclaimed as a comprehensive one.

Moreover, the statement by French President Jacques Chirac, the summit's co-host, that the summit was "an important step in the direction of better security for the world of tomorrow", sounds hollow. Similarly the words uttered by U.S. President Bill Clinton: "Today we took another step back from the nuclear precipice", do not convey sincerity, given Washington's tacit support for Israel's nuclear weapons program.

Nevertheless, Clinton expressed concern and criticized his host over Moscow's determination in building nuclear plants to help meet Iran's growing energy needs.

Clinton's concern for the ninth time was to no avail. On all the previous occasions and this time too, Yeltsin flatly refused to back down. "We intend to go through with it" declared Yeltsin. The Russian leader did not display any reluctance in making it known to his American counterpart that Moscow was not very keen to alter its stance to please Washington.

Yeltsin, however, attacked NATO's nuclear policy and stated that nuclear weapons should be based only in their home countries. He highlighted the issue because many NATO members have allowed the United States and Britain to station nuclear arms on their soil. For instance, some U.S. weapons remain in Germany. "Russia considers it a proliferation of nuclear arms when nuclear weapons are placed on the territory of non-nuclear states," Yeltsin declared.

Nevertheless, Clinton's worry that one day Iran may produce nuclear arms, might have gained the sympathy of some leaders if he had at least implicitly made it known that the U.S. in [as published] also keen to see the whole of the Middle East remain free from nuclear arms.

Iran: Foreign Ministry Spokesman Responds to U.S. 'Threat'

LD2404210096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Following a threat issued by U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry on the use of nuclear weapons, the spokesman of our country's Foreign Ministry announced: At a time when the peace-loving countries of the world are concerned about the region's security and stability and are making extensive efforts to end the crisis in Lebanon and the killing of innocent people of that country, a threat made by the defense secretary of America, the only country that has used such horrible weapons in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and has killed hundreds of thousands of civilians, is a source of regret and concern for the world community.

The spokesman of our country's Foreign Ministry added: The announcement of such a stance proves America's insincerity in adhering to the international conventions which concern the banning of nuclear weapons and their destruction.

The spokesman of our country's Foreign Ministry said: While the Islamic Republic of Iran and many other Middle Eastern countries are trying to rid the region of nuclear weapons, the shameless threat issued by America on the use of nuclear weapons and that country's support for the nuclear policies of the Zionist regime identify the elements who threaten the region's security.

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Iran: More From Foreign Ministry on Perry's Nuclear 'Threat'

LD2504135896 Tehran IRNA in English 1245 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 25, IRNA — The Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman, Mahmud Mohammadi, on Thursday [25 April] expressed concern over the U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry's threat that the U.S. will use nuclear arms to support the Zionist regime.

In his speech to the Jewish league, Perry reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to keep up Israel's military superiority.

Mohammadi said the threat posed by the U.S. defence secretary has aroused concern for the international community.

Mohammadi said at a time when the peace-loving states are worried about the security and stability of the region and have launched extensive peace efforts to put an end to the Lebanese crisis and to the mass killing of the innocent people there, the threat posed by the Defence Secretary of the United States, as the only country that killed thousands of civilians by dropping atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nakasaki, is only a cause of concern and regret in the international community.

"Such threats prove the non-commitment and unfairness of the United States towards the international conventions on banning the use of nuclear arms and weapons of mass destruction," he said.

He said, "while the Islamic Republic of Iran and many regional countries support the Middle East free from nuclear arms, the bullying threat of the United States to use nuclear arms along with its support for the Zionist regime's nuclear policy indicate that which regimes are threatening the security of the region."

Iran: Daily on U.S. Efforts To Thwart Russia-Iran Cooperation

NC2504190396 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 22 Apr 96 p 15

[Political commentary: "The Moscow Session and Another Defeat for the White House"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A new round of U.S. efforts to exert economic pressure on Islamic Iran has ended in defeat. These efforts surfaced during the session of the heads of the seven industrialized nations of the West, Russia, and Ukraine with Clinton's insistence that Yeltsin halt nuclear cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran and Yeltsin's opposition to the same. Once again, the Americans experienced the bitter taste of defeat in eliciting international cooperation in pressuring Islamic Iran.

Clinton, who had succeeded in incorporating the discussion on the need for a halt to nuclear cooperation between Russia and the Islamic Republic of Iran in the agenda of the Moscow conference, encountered a frigid response from his Western allies on the one hand and the overt opposition of the Russian president on the other. He admitted the ineffectiveness of his efforts against Islamic Iran and said in an interview: "The United States is opposed to nuclear cooperation between Russia and Iran but we are aware that Moscow will continue such cooperation even against our wishes."

He admitted that in his talks with him, Yeltsin clearly stressed the need for continued nuclear cooperation between his country and Iran.

Thus, the Americans have once again tasted the bitterness of political defeat in their campaign against Islamic Iran in the international political arena. While the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] has frequently inspected the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear projects and has endorsed their peaceful nature repeatedly, and these projects have never been hidden from any international organization, the Americans have resorted to all possible means to halt these activities due to their malicious attitude toward the Islamic Revolution.

These efforts have been quite fruitless so far. This is because in addition to the legal and acceptable nature of the Islamic Republic of Iran's program from the perspective of international regulations, the fact is that we are being subjected to pressure from a government which itself does not have the slightest regard for these regulations on international relations and this reality is clear to all governments.

The United States is the largest country with nuclear weapons and the biggest government that is indifferent to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT], while at the same time being its most vociferous advocate. Thus it has ignited innumerable crises due to its political arbitrariness. The Americans' nuclear arsenal has been consistently expanded in a covert manner without even an iota of regard for international norms, even in the post Cold War era, and has in practice generated crises on the Korean peninsula and in Indo-Pakistan relations.

Extensive efforts have recently been made to disrupt reciprocal cooperation between Russia and Iran and the PRC and Iran. These efforts have yielded nothing but an even greater deepening of the atmosphere of hatred for the White House in the Iranian nation.

U.S. President Clinton also made immense efforts against the Islamic Republic of Iran last year to thwart

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cooperation between the PRC and the Islamic Republic of Iran. In 1374 [year beginning 21 March 1995] Moscow-Washington relations became strained due to the sale of a Russian nuclear reactor to Iran and Moscow's indifference to Washington's warnings. The U.S. Congress proposed a bill stipulating that if Moscow did not suspend the sale of the reactor to Iran, it would be deprived of U.S. financial aid.

Despite the above, Moscow, which has witnessed innumerable acts of U.S. deceit regarding its much publicized and scant assistance, did not heed any of these warnings. Last year, Clinton travelled to Moscow, prior to which he claimed that he had documentary evidence that would easily convince Moscow to cancel its nuclear armaments [taslihat] program with Iran and to refrain from selling reactors.

Apparently, the U.S. alleged documentary evidence was not convincing enough and bore great resemblance to White House forgeries. Hence this did not have any effect on the Russians' firm determination to broaden their nuclear cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Like the previous trip, Clinton's current visit to Moscow is another effort in futility that will bring nothing but more political disgrace and humiliation to the American administration.

Iran: Paper Assesses U.S. Official's Visit to Afghanistan

LD2504183496 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 22 Apr 96 p 12

[Commentary by M. Mollazehi: "Fruitless Interference in Afghanistan"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Mrs. Robin Raphel, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for South Asian affairs, has met and conferred with Borhanoddin Rabbani, the Afghan president, and Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, military commander of Afghanistan's Jam'iyat-e Eslami [Islamic Society], at an important military base 35 km from Kabul.

Raphel is trying to find a solution to end the power struggle in Afghanistan. She has also had similar meetings with the Pakistani authorities and has gone to Kandahar to meet with Taleban.

She is following her new peace efforts in Afghanistan at a time when General Abdorrashid Dostam is in New York. There are rumors that he may, with U.S. encouragement, become closer to the Taleban group, the main opposition group to President Rabbani.

In view of these facts, the regional visit of Raphel and her meetings with the parties concerned will become more important.

The fact of the matter is that America is not a neutral party in the Afghan issue, therefore, one cannot expect it to contribute to a lasting peace in Afghanistan.

What has happened in the Afghan civil war so far over the past few years emanates, to a large extent, from the fact that regional and international rivalry for influence in Afghanistan still continues. America has always been a side which has intensified this unjust rivalry.

We can say that while in the past the war in Afghanistan was justified because of rivalry between America and the former Soviet Union, at present, there is a pattern in the regional and international rivalry which justifies the continuing power struggle in Afghanistan. One could describe the form of rivalry in Afghanistan as follows:

First: An unwritten alliance between the United States, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Taleban.

Second: Cooperation between Russia, India, Iran, and Rabbani's government.

Naturally none of the parties mentioned above are ready to admit to such an unwritten alliance, however, the complex of policies adopted by them does not leave any room for doubt.

The interests and strategic viewpoints of each of those countries and the Afghan groups require that there must be difference between their open political position and their hidden military stand. The complication of the Afghan issue is hidden in this fact.

In view of this, the U.S. interference in Afghanistan is more effective than any other country in contributing to the continuation of the power struggle among the rival groups in Afghanistan.

Following the establishment of the Jam'iyat-e Eslami party in Afghanistan, the United States and the allied countries felt that their investment has not brought the desired expectations. Although the establishment of Rabbani's power in Kabul is relative the balance of power is such that the groups favored by the United States and its allies will not be able to change sovereignty in Kabul by military means.

Raphel's visit to Kabul and her talks with Rabbani and Mas'ud are important because the United States is moving towards a more realistic understanding of the balance of power. If such an interpretation is confirmed in future, one could imagine that the U.S. efforts to eliminate Jam'iyat-e Eslami through the tribal and factional dealing have failed in Afghanistan. The

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United States has reduced its expectations to the level that all the internal factions should have an equal share in Afghanistan's future power structure. Such a transformation could prepare a better ground for some reconciliation in Afghanistan.

The experiment of tribal or factional monopoly of power has failed in Afghanistan. The experiment of international and regional rivalry has also failed. The continuation of the power struggle does not have any prospect. Therefore, the only solution which remains is to make efforts to create a compromise between the interests and the reality of balance of power and the just and balanced distribution of power inside the country and ending the foreign interference in Afghanistan.

If Raphel has not come to Kabul with such an understanding, then her visit will remain fruitless.

Iran: Pact With Russia Could Counter Turkish-Israeli Pact

LD2504200096 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 21 Apr 96 p 12

["The Ankara-Tel Aviv agreement and four alternatives open to Iran" — article by Ruzbeh Bolhari]

[FBIS Translated Text] In accordance with the Ankara-Tel Aviv military pact, last week fighter planes of the Zionist regime landed at various airports in Turkey. The following points encouraged Ankara and Tel Aviv to sign such a pact:

One: In view of the dispute between Turkey, Syria, and Iraq on the water rights of the Euphrates, Turkey feels the need for a regional ally. Other Arab countries support the stances of Damascus and Baghdad on this dispute. In addition, most of Turkey's neighbors do not enjoy friendly relations with Ankara because of its regional diplomacy and its expansionist policies in other parts of the Middle East, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Balkans.

Two: The Zionist regime has not yet managed to sign a peace accord with Syria. It, therefore, wishes to exploit the water dispute issue between Syria and Turkey, by engaging the former on two fronts.

Three: The role of Turkey and the Zionist regime, as the main allies of the United States in the Middle East, is not confined to their geographical boundaries. Rather, the U.S. strategists believe that these two countries can assist America to present a better picture of itself in the Middle East. These two countries can play their role in the economic and military fields. In the economic field, they can influence the Middle East market; and thanks to their military capabilities, [Turkey's] NATO membership, and [Israeli] cooperation with that organization, they are suitable powers to combat the Islamic revival, growing nationalism in the Middle East, and the progressive countries of the region. One should also not forget that Ankara's expansionist desires in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Balkans can also help America to increase its influence in those regions.

Four: The success of the Refah [Welfare] party in the recent parliamentary elections in Turkey has paved the way for an even faster revival of Islam in that country. No doubt the Zionists in occupied Palestine and the supporters of secularism in Turkey are unhappy with this fact. In this respect Turkey needs to increase security cooperation with Tel Aviv. The experience of the Zionist regime could benefit Ankara in order to combat Islamic revival, as well as controlling the Kurds, who are fighting for their independence.

Details of the Ankara-Tel Aviv agreement have not been revealed yet, but countries in the region, including Iran, Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Kuwait, have strongly opposed the pact. The stance adopted by Egypt is also interesting. Cairo is concerned that it may lose its special status in the Middle East. At the same time Egypt has to settle its disagreement with the Zionist regime over the latter's nuclear capability.

In view of the anti-Islamic and anti-Iranian nature of the Tel Aviv regime, the issue of the Zionists' deployment [of aircraft] close to the Iranian borders cannot be overlooked. In this context several alternative are open to Iran:

A. Military cooperation with Russia. Such cooperation can be realized in the form of a defense pact.

B. Expansion of ties with such countries as Greece and Serbia, which oppose Turkish policies. Expansion of ties with Serbia, however, should not undermine Iran's traditional relations with Bosnia. One should also bear in mind that Turkey intends to increase its influence in Bosnia.

C. Coordination with Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, and Libya in order to set up a united front to combat the Ankara-Tel Aviv agreement. Formation of such a united front can only pursue the said objective and may have nothing to do with the differences among these countries. For instance, Syria and Iraq are cooperating with each other over the Euphrates water [disputed with Turkey].

D. Another alternative is to adopt a more active diplomacy [against Turkey]. This could include efforts leading to the withdrawal of Turkey's occupying forces from Cyprus, refusal to allow transit facilities to Turkey to expand its influence in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and seeking new transit routes for Iran. Our country can use

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the Volga-Don canal as a transit route to Europe. Such measures can demonstrate to Turkey that Iran has other alternatives and Ankara may realize that friendship is better than hostility with neighbors.

Russia: Paper Says Attacks on Lebanon Cause Propaganda Worries

LD2504213196 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 20 Apr 96 p 16

["Political Note" by Dr. 'Abolqasem Qasemzadeh: "Clinton's and Peres' Worry"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] One of Shim'on Peres's aims in attacking Lebanon was to demonstrate Israel's military might to the public and evoke a sense of revenge in the Zionists, and U.S. President Bill Clinton's aim was to establish Zionist hegemony in the Middle East. Now the martyrdom of hundreds of men, women, and children, old people and ordinary people and those seeking shelter in the UN building, has aroused world public opinion against Peres and Clinton, and has given both of them grave worries about the defeat of their war tactics in Lebanon and about taking advantage of it in the elections.

Before the pictures of the savage massacre of defenseless people at the UN building appeared on television screens, the United Nations and the Security Council, under pressure from the U.S. envoy and his threat to veto any resolution against Israel, refrained from making any proposal to condemn the Israeli attacks on Lebanon. Soon after the Security Council's abstention, Peres, the prime minister of the Zionist regime, said that he would continue the attacks, and the U.S. President, who was in Moscow, remained silent and kept himself away from the Middle East news scene by going to Japan and Russia. As soon as reports were published of the air raids, according to which UN officials also witnessed the tragic scenes of the massacre of the people who had sought shelter in the premises of the UN peacekeepers, changes were observed in America's political stance. The U.S. President hurriedly announced that America would take rapid measures to halt the attacks and bring about a cease-fire and that the U.S. secretary of state was on his way to Israel and the Middle East.

British Prime Minister John Major, too, went from all-round support for Israel to declaring the ineffectiveness of Israel's air raids and the failure of the tactic, and said that there should be a cease-fire, albeit a temporary one. The Russian president also officially condemned the Israeli attacks and the Russian Government issued a formal statement calling for the immediate cessation of the Israeli attacks on Lebanon. The rush of taking a new stance and reconsidering views shows that Mr. Clinton's plans for Mr. Peres have gone wrong and that there is fresh doubt about the re-election of Shim'on Peres as Israel's prime minister and his success in Western mass media.

Through years of Israeli aggression and civil war, as an oppressed country and nation, Lebanon has exposed two inhuman and hypocritical entities to the world. It has unmasked the inhuman Zionists and has exposed further the hypocrisy of the Arab leaders and their subservience to Israel and the West. The initial result of the recent Zionist attacks on Lebanon has been just that.

U.S. President Clinton now faces the question from world and American public opinion as to how, soon after the Sharm al-Shaykh conference, in which the United States used the term "peace" every three minutes and gave Shim'on Peres a $100 million loan to combat terrorism, as it were, in the Middle East, Israel's land and air attacks on defenseless Lebanese territory, the bombardment of residential areas and the massacre of ordinary people seeking shelter in the UN building occurred?

Shim'on Peres, too, sees that the propaganda atmosphere inside Israel is against him, and that inside the occupied lands the attack is regarded as a failed show of strength. The truth is that, even if the Oslo peace plan and the lines along which 'Arafat, Peres, and Clinton move towards peace achieve limited calm and relative peace, they would be incapable of resolving the deep-rooted differences and bringing about lasting peace. [passage omitted]

For 40 years the Zionist regime has shown that it seeks its stability in war and crisis and that today, with its nuclear weapons, it is the only country that openly disregards and violates all international rules and regulations and laws governing nuclear arms. And, enjoying America's support, it has become one of the most terrible military regimes and is the greatest threat to lasting peace in the Middle East and the world. Whatever the outcome of the attacks on Lebanon, that threat will remain and the establishment of the Zionist and racist regime of Israel in the Middle East is synonymous with the absence of peace.

Iran: Iranian Diplomat on U.S. Embargo on Country

NC2504055796 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 23 Apr 96 p 1

[Report on interview with Kamal Kharrazi, permanent UN representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, by

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unidentified TEHRAN TIMES correspondent in Tehran; date not given—received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran—U.S. companies are the main losers of the embargo the Clinton administration imposed on Iran last June, Iran's permanent representative to the United Nations, Kamal Kharrazi told the TEHRAN TIMES. In a bid to study the economic repercussions of the U.S. embargo against Iran and its impact on American companies, a seminar will be held in Dallas, Texas in May, said Kharrazi. Despite the prevailing discord among U.S. politicians and academicians over Washington's stance toward Tehran, the White House maintains dual containment against the Islamic Republic of Iran; Kharrazi said. Sooner or later, he added, Washington will realize that its stance toward Tehran is not realistic and that economic and political pressure on Iran will not yield any results.

The move is not based on geopolitical realities but is due to the interests of a third party, the Zionist regime, stressed Kharrazi.

Asked if Iran is to take legal action against the U.S. move to allocate $20 million to undermine the Islamic Republic, and branding the move a blatant interference in Iran's domestic affairs, Kharrazi said that Tehran can file a law suit at the International Court in The Hague. He said the U.S. move was against the Algerian Agreement. He added that submitting the case to the International Court was being studied.

On Turkey's recent agreement to concede military bases to the Zionist regime, Kharrazi said the Zionist regime, in a long-term policy, intends to strengthen its foothold in the region.

Kharrazi said that Tehran maintains the agreement was signed for this purpose; he considers it a threat against regional countries. He noted that in his recent visit to Ankara, Iran's Foreign Minister Velayati announced Tehran's stance toward the cooperation between the Zionist regime and Turkey.

Asked about Iran's stance toward the Palestinian crisis if the so-called peace talks between Syria and Israel bear fruit, Kharrazi emphasized that such a peace cannot guarantee the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people; it is more of a surrender than peace.

Iran's stance toward Palestine is clear and is founded on principle, he said.

Evaluating the international condemnations of the Zionist regime's recent attacks on Lebanon, including that of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Kharrazi said that although such organizations lack any punitive system, denunciation of crimes is significant from a political and psychological point of view.

He said that, without considering any punitive measures against the aggressors, the UN Security Council has asked for a cease-fire, but Washington has threatened to veto any resolution against the Zionist regime.

Furthermore, it is crystal clear that the UN and the Security Council have a double standard for different countries, said Kharrazi.

The Security Council is to guarantee the interests of the permanent members through right of the veto, he said, adding that unfortunately, so long as the right of veto exists, the world will witness UN double standard policies.

On certain reports accusing Iran of violating human rights, Kharrazi said that the European human rights commissions prepare their reports mainly on the basis of false information; this leads us to doubt our continued cooperation with the rapporteur of the human rights commission. Furthermore, he said, such reports indicate that human rights have become a political means in the hands of certain countries.

In an attempt to abort such allegations, Iran should try to introduce human rights criteria proposed in Islam, showing that Islamic human rights not only covers all the rights considered by Europe, but is more comprehensive than any other school of thought.

He called on the government to make available to foreign organizations, journalists and correspondents proper information on human rights in Iran. If foreigners become acquainted with the realities in Iran, such propaganda will bear no results; Thus, the enemy will be disarmed.

Asked about Iran's initiative on international disarmament, Kharrazi said Iran's initiative, introduced by Velayati in Geneva, showed that Iran is active in proposing plans in this regard. Iran is also the country which called for declaring the Middle East a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (NWFZ). He added that Iran's active participation in international conferences will help eliminate doubts regarding its stance on various issues.

Elaborating on the UN role in the international system, Kharrazi said the UN is highly impressed by the balance of power between the big powers, and, undoubtedly, the UN will be the venue for manifestation of any future power equilibrium.

He said the expansion of the UN Security Council is one of the most controversial issues currently under study; it is not, however, clear whether the expansion will include permanent or contemporary members.

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On the services Iran's representative offices abroad are providing Iranians who are willing to return to their country, Kharrazi said that under the present plan, Iranians with a specialty come every year to Iran in order to take short courses and thus become familiar with developments in Iran.

Iran: U.S. Pays Compensation for Downing of Airliner

LD2504133996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the legal cases against America at international legal forums of the Islamic Republic of Iran, finally the United States paid up $61,800,000 as compensation for those who were killed when an Iran air airbus was brought down over the Persian Gulf.

In an interview with IRNA today, the supervisor of the bureau for international legal services, Mr. Eftekhar-Jahromi, said the sum has been deposited at the UBS bank in Switzerland to be paid gradually to the families of the victims of the Iran air airbus tragedy.

He added that on top of that sum, America has also paid to the Islamic Republic of Iran the sum of $40 million as compensation for the [cost of the] aircraft which was brought down, and another $30 million for a number of other banking cases which had been filed at the international court of justice at The Hague.

The supervisor of the bureau of international legal services stressed that it has been decided that the compensation will be paid to the families of the victims during a period of eight years. All victims' families should hand over all the necessary documents, the details of which will be announced in the national press at a later date, to the bureau of international legal services for the initial investigations.

The USS Vincennes warship brought down the Iran air airbus on 12 tir 1367 [3 July 1988] over the Persian Gulf.

Iran: Obituary Praises British Muslim Leader

LD2504190396 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 21 Apr 96 p 15

[Report: "Death of Kalim Siddiqui; A Star Disappears From the Dark Sky of Europe"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Dr. Kalim Siddiqui, the leader of the British Muslims' parliament and the influential politician and writer, died of a heart attack in Pretoria, South Africa, on Thursday [18 April]. He had been suffering from a heart disease for some time and was 63 when he died. [passage omitted]

After obtaining a doctorate degree in political sciences, Dr. Siddiqui pursued journalism and was eventually promoted to assistant chief editor of the high circulation daily THE GUARDIAN. In this position he played an effective role in defending the rights of the Muslims in Britain. Several years later he was asked to run the Muslims Institute in London.

When Imam Khomeyni issued his religious fatwa against Salman Rushdie, who wrote the blasphemous book of "The Satanic Verses", the Muslims in Britain staged rallies in support of the fatwa. Dr. Siddiqui accepted the responsibility of defending and explaining the fatwa to the British people. He believed no individual or terrestrial authority could revoke Imam Khomeyni's fatwa. He used to say: "This is God's edict, which has been communicated through Imam Khomeyni." Once in the year 1992 he said: "If I get my hands on Rushdie, I would break every bone in his body."

Dr. Siddiqui was a supporter of the Iranian Islamic revolution. He repeatedly criticized the U.S. policies against Iran and regarded the Islamic Republic of Iran as a model of an Islamic government in the world. [passage omitted]

Iran: Paper Calls Israeli Raids 'Ethnic Cleansing'

LD2504170296 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 21 Apr 96 p 2

[Article: "Ethnic Cleansing, Continued"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] It took more than 160 civilians dead and double that number wounded in Lebanon for US President Bill Clinton to "call for a cease-fire" in the ongoing Zionist-Hizballah conflict.

Uncle Sam was and is aware that Israeli adventurism has almost always resulted in disaster for the region and death and destruction for civilian life and property. Yet Bill's White House openly supported Israel's incredibly brutal aggression against Lebanese civilians throughout this past week when leaders across the globe were demanding an urgent end to the hostilities.

Given such American shamelessness, Zionist Prime Minister Shim'on Peres understandably started acting as a full-fledged general out to destroy the Lebanese nation. And on Thursday [18 April] the most unthinkable happened, that is, more than 100 Lebanese civilian refugees were killed when Israeli shells devastated a United Nations camp.

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As the respectable people of the world in general and the Lebanese in particular were grappling with the latest grief and horror inflicted by America's closest ally in the Middle East, Clinton made another outrageous statement. Justifying the massacre of defenceless women and children in Qana, the "superman" of America declared "it is almost impossible for innocent civilians not to get hurt or killed" because of their proximity to the area of fighting.

Once against Israel has resorted to mind-boggling atrocities against the Muslim people of Lebanon. For 10 days the Zionist military is pouring bombs and rockets over the country whose only demand is an end to the occupation of its land in the south. Now that Tel Aviv has decided to add another bloody page to its crime-ridden history of anti-Muslim terror and slaughter, Israel and its supporters should be prepared for retribution, retaliations and revenge from Lebanon's resistance fighters and their friends in Palestine.

The tragedy in Qana was no fluke. It was a pattern engineered and implemented by a regime run in large part by generals who murder and think they have a right to whatever they very much desire. Had the pioneers of human rights stopped and punished Israeli lawlessness over the past four decades, the world and supporters of peace would not have had to witness the bizarre and frightening display of terror in Qana on Thursday.

Despite the Israeli-brand of ethnic cleansing and the immense loss of human life, Tel Aviv yet again could not achieve its primary goal of silencing the Hizballah rocket-launchers. On the contrary it is being reported that thousands are flocking at Hizballah centres "to become resistance fighters" and take their revolutionary struggle deep inside occupied Palestine.

Another new dimension of the old Israeli-Lebanese hostility is that even the traditional backers of the Zionist regime are recognizing the obvious truth that not Hizballah but the occupation of southern Lebanon is the root cause of the violence.

Though belatedly, many in Europe and elsewhere are learning to distinguish between fact and fiction, reality and fantasies, liberation struggles and raw terrorism.

The Qana massacre will undoubtedly leave a scar so deep in the Lebanese psyche that it will not heal. A long time has passed since Israel, the US and Britain had been hoping and praying that Hezbollah would fade away. All signs are that it won't. Especially after Peres demonstrated such outrage against humanity and all norms of civilized behaviour in Qana.

Iran: Results of Seminar on Chemical Weapons Noted

NC2504075796 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 25 Apr 96

[Commentary by News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] The regional seminar on the chemical weapons convention, which opened on Tuesday [23 April] with a number of ambassadors and representatives of various countries in Tehran participating, is to end its work today. In addition to examining the topic of chemical disarmament, how to implement the 1371 [1992] convention on banning the manufacture, use, and storage of chemical weapons — a convention signed by 160 countries — is to be studied.

The seminar on the chemical weapons convention being held in Tehran is actually a link in the chain of regional seminars that have up to now been held in 15 countries with the objective of banning the manufacture, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons.

Although the history of the legal ban on these weapons dates back more than 120 years, the need to confront such weapons was seriously considered for the first time after World War I and the massacre of 100,000 people with chemical weapons. The signing of the Geneva Protocol in 1925 was a reflection of the demands of various countries in this sphere. However, the major fault in the protocol was that it banned only the use of chemical weapons, whereas it did not ban the manufacture and stockpiling of, and research on, such weapons. This created favorable grounds for the powerful countries to spend great amounts on research as well as on the manufacturing and storage of chemical weapons, despite their refrainment from the use of such weapons during World War II. Also, the absence of a guarantee of implementation of the Geneva Protocol was considered to be another shortcoming.

On the whole, because of the big countries' indifference toward the threat of chemical weapons, the world witnessed 250 cases of the use of chemical weapons against Iran during the imposed [Iran-Iraq] war more than 50 years after the signing of the Geneva Protocol, and the tragedy of the chemical attack on Halabjah upset all the wary people in the world. The world thus once again found itself facing the tragic dimensions of the use of such weapons, and it became clear how greatly neglect in this sphere can pose new dangers to international security.

Therefore, as a result of efforts by various countries and especially Iran in order to overcome the shortcomings in

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the Geneva Protocol, the agreement banning chemical weapons was signed in 1371 in Paris. This agreement envisages a ban on the manufacture, storage, and use of, and research on, chemical weapons.

There is no doubt that this agreement will be effective and have the necessary impact when coupled with a guarantee of implementation and when all violations in the field of chemical weapons — namely their manufacture, export, and use — are strongly and decisively confronted. Also, with this agreement, the extent of the big powers' commitment to international pacts will be seriously tested once again, because by refraining from conducting research on chemical weapons and by preventing the export of raw materials needed to manufacture such weapons, as well as through their cooperation with international bodies in confronting violators legally, these countries will show how seriously interested in [banning] the manufacture and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction they are.

Iran: Article Views Reformation of Subsidy System

LD2304210996 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 20 Apr 96 p 4

[Article by Dr. Habib Chini: "Economic Note: Removal of Subsidies and Reduction of Poverty"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] ABRAR was one of the first media to put forward the necessity for reforming the subsidy system and said that both the rich and the poor benefit from the current method. We also said that farmers sell their products to the government at guaranteed prices and then stand in queues for goods that are subsidized. In our mention of the spread of mad cow disease in Europe, we said that to subsidize imported goods is in fact encouraging imports and helping foreign manufacturers, while we should give that assistance to our own manufacturers and exporters. We based our argument about reforming the subsidy system on the principle of being fair. Nowadays, in the second year of the country's second executive plan, the price of government goods is going up one after the other. Higher prices are being announced, not in the form of higher prices, but as the removal of subsidies. [passage omitted]

We have previously written about the rise in the price of some goods, so we will not repeat ourselves. However, it should be pointed out that the removal of the subsidies and the raising of prices over and above that which was approved in the budget does not mean reforming the subsidy system and no measures have been taken yet about needy families. One should not seek those needy families on Mars; practically all government employees and salary and wage earners are among the needy. In the case of the jobless and disabled it goes without saying. If there is talk of reforming the subsidy system, one should speak of being fair, not increasing inflation, which puts the greatest pressure on the above mentioned groups. [passage omitted]

Moreover, giving subsidies should be aimed at making manufacturers autonomous for the purpose of privatizing them. That is, they first become self-governing, then profitable, then their shares are floated so that our economy, 75 to 85 percent of which is currently state-controlled, is changed and economic tasks are devolved to the people and the government is free to concentrate on fundamental programs. Unfortunately, while subsidies are being constantly removed, government interference, state and semi-government ownership, monopolies and semi-monopolies still exist.

Furthermore, it has never been announced what percentage subsidy each firm receives from the government and in how many years government subsidies will be eliminated completely, so the people who run them can prepare their budgets and plan for their operations. Once upon a time, governments borrowed from the Central Bank using jewels as collateral and, since the national jewels were never valued, it was not apparent how much government notes were worth or how far government credit could be extended. Now, in the case of the removal of subsidies, it would be best to announce, in the case of each industry, what percentage subsidy it receives and how long before it reaches zero, so the people will not attribute future price rises to subsidy elimination and will seek their true cause.

In any case, we hope the removal of subsidies moves, in full coordination, towards shedding poverty, helping needy families, and balancing salaries and wages. Because, otherwise, great harm will be inflicted on the more needy and move us away from social justice, which has now become one of the fundamental goals of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

One of our difficulties in recent years has been that, out of a series of interrelated programs, which have reciprocal effects on each other, we have adopted some and discarded others and naturally the desired results have not been obtained. Sometimes even the opposite results have been achieved, as in the case of the series of decisions which should have been made last year regarding foreign exchange and exports, and only the fixing of the exchange rate was carried out. Ultimately, last year, the country's non-oil exports were $1.5 billion less than in the year before. The executive machinery should note that economic and social affairs are linked like a chain and if one link breaks, all the efforts will be rendered fruitless.

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Now that, with the removal of the subsidies, goods are getting more and more expensive the government should curb inflation or at least bring incomes in line at the same time. Otherwise, this year we will witness an inflation rate close to last year's 60 percent. We hope it will not be so and that the government will be successful in curbing inflation, increasing social justice, shedding poverty, and looking after the weak and middle classes. God willing.

Iran: Daily on 5th Majles Session

LD2504155296 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 22 Apr 96 p 2

[Daily: "Let the 5th Majles Be a Turning Point for Peace and Prosperity"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The announcement of election results yesterday capped the process for the fifth term of the Majles, which will formally open on 27 May. There are a few constituencies where by-elections are to be held in six months time.

Iran and the entire region are facing a crucial phase in history because of the United States-Zionist combined strategy against Islam, and the passive stand of certain countries in this part of the world.

Iran shoulders an historic responsibility in maintaining peace and harmony in the region while countering the machinations of the United States and Israel.

Political awareness among the people of the region is at its highest level and everyone well understands the geo-political importance of Iran.

The country is lucky in the sense that it has a leader whose political vision, coupled with an understanding of critical issues, is a guarantee that here we have an island of peace.

The three heads of the ruling system, i.e. the legislative body, government and judiciary, are reliable and the nation can depend upon them for a bright future.

During the elections, the factions and groups exchanged accusations and harsh comments. Such a practice is natural in any democratic country. But politicians in mature nations forget and forgive the heat of election campaigning and get on with governing.

Fortunately, Iran's democratic history tells us that rivals in the past always join hands with each other after elections and offer their services to the construction of the country.

All those who have won the recent Majles elections and those who did not receive the people's mandate, along with their supporters, must join hands for a greater task, putting the aspirations of the Leader of the Deprived, the late Imam Khomeyni, into practice.

We all should remember that we shoulder crucial responsibilities not only towards our own nation but also for the deprived across the world.

For this we have to keep our own house in order through sincere unity and coordination between the ranks of society and under the leadership of Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i.

We have a long way to go both for the nation and the deprived of the world and for this reason we have to forget petty differences among us. Let the fifth term of the Majles be a landmark for peace and prosperity.

Iran: Paper Warns Against Reemergence of 'Subservient Clerics'

LD2504203996 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 22 Apr 96 p 12

["Liberalism and its sphere of influence in the seminary" — editorial commentary]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] References by the great leader to the existence of a liberal tendency, which sought appeasement during the time of the former regime, are a warning to the revolutionary people of Iran, particularly the youth, to keep away from this tendency, to forbid them a presence on the social and political stage, and to keep them back from important posts. This tendency has a lengthy record in the theological colleges and has never been trustworthy. According to the great imam [Khomeyni], peace be upon him, at the time of the hated Pahlavi regime, these people praised the despot and helped to implement the evil plans of the colonialists and their subserviant Pahlavi regime. This is how his eminence, Imam [Khomeyni], may God be satisfied with him, referred to this period:

"The true clerics wept blood in loneliness and captivity because America and its servant Pahlavi regime wanted to uproot religion and Islam; and because a group of pseudo-spiritual clerics, who were either uninformed or fooled and a group of subserviant people, whose true nature was revealed after the revolution, prepared the way for great treachery. The pseudo-spiritual clerics have caused more damage to Islam than anyone else."

The subservient clerics spared no effort in maintaining the despot and standing against the tempest of the revolution. They stood against the firm leadership of the imam, may God be satisfied with him, by repeating that "the Shah should stay as a constitutional monarch" and that "the Shah should stay and implement the constitution." After the revolution, they plotted against the

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Islamic system in different forms and went as far as plotting a coup to kill the great leader of the revolution and defeat the revolution. The colonial influence in the theological colleges for training of seemingly acceptable forces at various levels has allowed a group of irresponsible and dependent clerics to damage the revolution. Naturally, colonialism has not abandoned its policy for training elements among the clergy and is even following this policy with greater determination in order to damage the revolution in the distant future. Unfortunately, our forces have sometimes been careless, and in order to attract some untrustworthy people of poor reputation, have allowed them room. These are the very people who opposed the imam's ideas from the very beginning and who believed that "religious laws are for the hereafter," "theology has no place in governments of modern world," "Guardianship of the jurisconsult is unacceptable in modern civilization which is based on democracy," "the jurisconsult must supervise not interfere," etc. How could such people be trusted to manage the affairs and train pious clerical students on the basis of the pure thoughts of Imam Khomeyni? Imam believed that if the theological colleges were reformed, Iran would be reformed, so why is there not the necessary sensitivity and why are people with such ideas active and present, even more than forces who are revolutionary and who believe in the revolution and teachings of the late leader? [passage omitted]

Pakistan

Pakistan: Leghari Leaves for Saudi Arabia To Perform Pilgrimage

BK2504120496 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari left Karachi this afternoon for Saudi Arabia to perform Hajj. The president was accompanied by Governor, NWFP [North-West Frontier Province], Lieutenant General Retired Khurshid Ali Khan; Begum Nusrat Bhutto, MNA [Member of National Assembly]; besides his family and personal staff members. The president was seen off by the governor and the chief minister of Sindh.

Pakistan: Bhutto Returns Home After Visit to Syria

BK2504162996 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 25 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has expressed the confidence that ties between Pakistan and Syria will be further strengthened. In a statement before leaving Damascus for home, she said her talks with President Hafiz al-Asad and Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi covered a wide range of regional and international issues of mutual interest and concern. [passage omitted]

The prime minister was given a warm send off when she left Damascus. She was seen off at the airport by President Hafiz al-Asad and Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi. The prime minister has now returned home.

Pakistan: Cosponsorship of UN Resolution Against Israel Withdrawn

BK2604083096 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0800 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] At the United Nations General Assembly yesterday, Pakistan withdrew its cosponsorship of a resolution condemning the Israeli military attacks against Lebanon after the acceptance of a Russian amendment, which could have misinterpreted as an indirect recognition of Israel. Pakistan, however, voted for the resolution along with 63 other countries. Israel and the United States voted against the resolution, while 65 countries abstained.

The resolution adopted after three days of general debate condemned Israeli attacks against Lebanese civilian population. It called for ending the Israeli hostilities. The resolution accepts the right of all states in the region to live in peace and security within their recognized boundaries. The General Assembly had met for a special session to discuss the Israeli aggression at the request of the Nonaligned Movement and the [Organization of the] Islamic Conference.

The Pakistan ambassador, Mr. Ahmad Kamal, later said Pakistan's support for the resolution would have been even stronger had the draft resolution not been subjected to the Russian amendment.

Pakistan: Kashmir Committee Chairman Says Nuclear Program Not Capped

BK2504130496 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 25 Apr 96 p 5

[Report by THE MUSLIM's Karachi bureau]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KARACHI, April 24: Chairman, Parliamentary Committee for Kashmir Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan said here categorically that Pakistan has not capped her nuclear program. "Pakistan cannot cap it because once a knowledge or technology is acquired it cannot be capped, he added.

Addressing the members and office bearers of Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan said, that Pakistan was pursuing a peaceful atomic program for resolving her power problems but when India made her first

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nuclear explosion Pakistan acquired nuclear capability and despite pressure to roll back her atomic program Pakistan could not do so.

He further said that two wars were imposed on Pakistan and if now any war was imposed and the peace of the country which is number fifth in the world due to its population, was affected the peace of the other countries of the world would also be affected, he declared.

Dwelling at length on the background of Pakistan Movement and independence in 1947, he said that Pakistan was in a position to liberate the occupied Kashmir in 1962, but due to interference of Western powers the then president Field Marshal Ayub Khan, without taking his own national assembly into confidence, signed an agreement to negotiate with India on the issue.

He gave a run down position of Indian atrocities in occupied Kashmir and said that these atrocities were being committed with the objective to foil freedom movement which was gaining momentum day by day.

He said that all the member countries of SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] were fed up with Indian intention of hegemony whether it was Bangladesh, Nepal or Sri Lanka. It is only Pakistan amongst the members of SAARC countries which has not yet been cowed down by the hegemonistic designs of India," he added.

He further said that Kashmir has always been centre point of foreign policy of all the incumbent governments of Pakistan since her inception as an independent country. He said that Pakistan had never refused to talk to resolve the issue but it was India who deviated from its earlier stand and took a new stand.

Commenting on Dr Mahbubul Haq's [Pakistani intellectual] recent proposal on Kashmir Nawabzada criticized him and said that the basic purpose of this proposal was to create a misunderstanding between Pakistan and China.

Pakistan: 'Sources' Report U.S. Denied Permission To Sell F-16's

BK2504131396 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 25 Apr 96 pp 1, 9

[Report by Shakil Shaikh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has not granted permission to the United States to sell 28 multi-role F-16s to a third party under the Brown amendment.

Informed officials told The News on Wednesday [24 April] that the permission was denied because the "title" of these planes had not been transferred to Pakistan, which means Pakistan is not required to approve the sale of these aircraft.

"However, we have asked for the return of full money, both in cash and credit, paid for the fighter planes," said the official sources, who said it is provided in the Brown Amendment that the US government sells the aircraft to a third party and Pakistan is not bound, in anyway, by a law passed in any other country.

Elaborating the point, the sources said Pakistan is only interested in the refund and it is not concerned how the US government deals with these planes.

The United States sought the permission from Pakistan, said the sources, due to some legal problems. However, some legal experts in Pakistan opined that the permission should not be granted as the planes never belonged to Pakistan, although these were manufactured with the Pakistani money. "This is the main reason why Pakistan wants its money along with the interest," added the sources.

If the United States continued to delay the return of the F-16 money, Pakistan can exercise its right to take the US government to court, said the official sources privy to the recently held Defence Committee of Cabinet [DCC] which decided to keep both political and legal options open.

An official source, requesting not to be named, said two US lawyers Schneebaum and Lanny Davis representing Patton Boggs—made their presentation before the DCC on April 18. These lawyers found it a fit case for taking the US government to court for the refund of the F-16 money.

The DCC decided that since Pakistan still has at least three years before the six-year time limit from the date of the breach of F-16 contract, it is better to resolve the matter through political means," said informed officials.

They said at the April 2-4 defence talks held in Washington both the parties agreed to and signed the decisions without prejudice to the legal position of either government".

Pakistan, official sources said, has three ways to sue the United States take it to the International Court of Justice; take it to court for arbitration; or file a suit in an American court. "Consent of both parties would be required for the first two options. However, taking the US government to an American court for litigation has bright chances of victory," said the officials.

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Pakistan: Foreign Minister-Government Not To Sue U.S. Over F-16's

BK2504122096 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 25 Apr 96 pp 1, 11

[Report by Aroosa Alam]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD, April 24: Expressing dismay over the reported position of some friendly countries over the farce of elections in the held valley of Jammu and Kashmir stripping off the Kashmiri people of their right to self determination, Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali said Wednesday [24 April] evening that "whosoever talked of elections in held valley as an acceptable alternative to plebiscite, he has been unfair to all those states who believe in the UN Charter and the resolutions adopted under it."

The Foreign Minister made these observations while responding questions by pressmen after inaugurating the 7th National Exhibition of visual arts 96 in the National Council of Arts in Islamabad.

Responding to a very pertinent query by journalists over the reported statement of Iranian Ambassador in which he had said that though the elections can't substitute the plebiscite, Iran will respect the will of the people of Kashmir if they accept elections, Sardar Asif said that this is the position taken by many countries recently.

But it would not be fine with the people of Kashmir, Pakistan, Muslims of India, all Islamic states and all those states who believe in UN Charter and resolutions for self-determination. He said since Kashmir is on UN agenda I am surprised if anybody could hold such a view.

Reacting sharply to the reports and allegations by some quarters that Pakistan was interfering in the internal affairs of Afghanistan by extending support to the opposition parties, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali said in a very categoric and firm tone, we are not interfering and this is absolutely final and a responsible statement I am giving. "We have not interfered in the past and we have no such intention in future as well."

Replying a question about Senator Brown's statement regarding the incompetence of UN Secretary General Envoy Mahmoud Mestiri to find a peace formula, Sardar Asif said that notwithstanding with the personal views of Senator Brown, US Administration and Government of Pakistan fully support UN efforts and we shall continue to do so as we believe that UN can be a viable vehicle to deliver a peace formula for Afghanistan.

Sardar Asif said in light of ongoing hectic and intensified diplomatic efforts by Pakistan, Iran USA and other major powers Pakistan is very hopeful that finally we will be able to broker a peace deal between President Rabbani and the warring factions in Afghanistan.

He said my government has authorized me to engage the regional countries as well as superpowers into intense diplomatic discussions over the question of restoring peace in Afghanistan and my recent trips to USA, France, Iran, central Asian States and Foreign Secretary's visit to Moscow are all aimed at invoking the interest of these countries into Afghan imbroglio.

He said all the high profile visits to Pakistan and to Afghanistan are indicative that very hectic diplomatic efforts are now underway for a peaceful settlement of Afghan issue. He said we hope all Afghan leaders agree for a peace formula for the sake of their people and the country.

"As far as Pakistan is concerned we have no animosity with anybody in Afghanistan said Sardar in rather reconciliatory tone with an obvious reference to President Rabbani. He said we are friends of all Afghan people and all Afghan leaders.

Replying to battery of questions regarding the Pak-US relations and various reports that Pakistan was contemplating to sue the US over the non-delivery of F-16, the Foreign Minister said categorically that Pakistan has not taken any decision to sue USA over the issue of F-16, in fact the decision at the moment is that we are not going to the court of law.

He disclosed that in principle the US government has accepted that they had to make us the full payment of the non-delivered aircraft either it is through third country sale or otherwise that is for them to decide.

He said as far as Pakistan is concerned they are bound to refund us the money they owe to us.

Talking about the reconciliation of accounts, Sardar Asif said that there are many issues that need to be reconciled and one is on the military and other hardware.

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